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DEVOUT EXERCISES OF THE HEART,

IN MEDITATION AND SOLILOQUY PRAYER AND PRAISE.

By the late Pious and Ingenious Mrs. ROWE.

Reviewed and Published, at her *Request*,
By I. WATTS, D. D.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

An intimate FRIEND *of Mrs.* ROWE.

MADAM,

IF these pious MEDITATIONS, of so sublime a genius, should be inscribed to any name, there is none but Your's must have stood in the front of them. That long and constant intimacy of friendship with which you delighted to honour her, that high esteem and veneration you are pleased to pay her memory, and the sacred likeness and sympathy between two kindred souls, absolutely determine where this respect should be paid.

Besides, madam, you well know, that some copies out of these papers have been your own several years by the gift of the deceased; and the favour you have done me lately by your permission to peruse them, has assisted the correction of these *manuscripts* and would add another reason to support this inscription of them, if your fear of assuming too much honour could but have admitted this piece of justice

I know, madam, your tenderness and indulgence to every thing Mrs. Rowe has written, cannot withold your judgment from suspecting some of her expressions to be a

little to rapturous, and too near a kin to th
language of the myſtical writers; yet you
piety and candour will take no ſuch offenc
as to prevent your beſt improvement b
them in all that is divine and holy; and ma
your retired hours find ſuch happy aſſiſtan
ces and elevations hereby, that you ma
commence the joys of angels, and of bleſſe
ſpirits before hand.

And when your valuable life has been lon
extended amidſt all the temporal bleſſing
you enjoy, and the Chriſtian virtues yo
practiſe, may you at the call of God find
gentle diſmiſſion from mortallity, and aſcen
on high to meet your deceaſed friend in p
radiſe. Nor can I ſuppoſe that any of th
inhabitants of that bliſsful region will soon
recognize your glorified ſpirit, or will ſalu
your firſt appearance their with a more te
derſenſe of mutual ſatisfaction. There m
you join with your beloved Philomela,
paying celeſtial worſhip in exalted and u
known forms, to her God, and your God
and may the harmony of the place be a
ſiſted by your united ſongs to *Jeſus*, yo
common Saviour!

I am, madam, with great ſincerity a
eſteem,

Your moſt faithful,

Obedient ſervant,

Newington,
Sept. 29, 1737.

I. WAT

THE PREFACE.

THE admirable Author of these devotional papers has been in high esteem among the ingenious and the polite, since so many excellent fruits of her pen, both in verse and prose have appeared in public. She was early honoured under the feigned name of Philomela before the world was allowed to know Mrs. Elizabeth Singer by the name drawn from her family, or that of Mrs. Rowe which she acquired by marriage.

Though many of her writings that were published in her life time discover a pious and heavenly temper, and a warm zeal for religion and virtue; yet she chose to conceal the devotions of her heart till she was got beyond the censure and the applause of mortals. 'Twas enough that God, whom she loved with ardent and supreme affection, was witness to all her secret and intense breathings after him.

In February last he was pleased to call her out of our world, and take her to himself. Some time after her decease these manuscripts were transmitted to me, all included in one sheet of paper, and directed to me at Newington by her own hand. In the midst of them I found her letter, which intreated me to review them, and commit them to the press. This letter I have thought necessary to shew the world, not so much to discover my right to publish these pa-

pers, as to let the reader see something more of that holy and heavenly character which she maintained in an uniform manner both in life and death.

'Tis now almost thirty years ago since I was honoured with her acquaintance, nor could her great modesty conceal all her shining graces and accomplishments; but it is not my province to give a particular account of this excellent woman who has blessed and adorned our nation and our age. I expect her temper, her conduct, and her virtues will be set in a just and pleasing light among the memoirs of her life, by some near relations to whom the care of her poetical pieces, and her familiar letters is committed.

These devout exercises are animated with such fire, as seems to speak the language of holy passion, and discovers them to be the dictates of her heart; and those who were favoured with her chief intimacy will most readily believe it. The style, I confess, is raised above that of common meditation or soliloquy; but let it be remembered she was no common Christian. As her virtues were sublime, so her genius was bright and sparkling, and the vivacity of her imagination had a tincture of the muse almost from her childhood. This made it natural to her to express the inward sentiment of her soul in more exalted language, and to paint her own ideas in metaphor and rapture near a-kin to the diction of poesy.

The reader will here find a spirit dwelling in flesh, elevated into divine transports, congenial to those of angels and unbodied minds. Her intense love to her God kindles at every hint, and transcends the

he limits of mortality. I ſcarce ever met with a-
y devotional writings which gave us an exam-
le of a ſoul, at ſpecial ſeaſons, ſo far raiſed above
very thing that is not immortal and divine.

Yet ſhe is conſcious of her frailties too: ſhe ſome-
imes confeſſes her folly and her guilt in the ſight of
God, in the moſt affecting language of a deep humilia-
ion. 'Tis with a pathetic ſenſibility of her weak-
neſs, and in the ſtrongeſt language of ſelf-diſplicen-
y, ſhe bewails her offences againſt her Creator
nd Redeemer; and in her intervals of darkneſs,
he vents her painful complaints and mournings for
he abſence of her higheſt and beſt beloved.

Let it be obſerved that it was much the faſhion,
even among ſome divines of eminence in former
ears, to expreſs the favours of devout love to our
Saviour in the ſtyle of the Song of Solomon: *and*
I muſt confeſs that ſeveral of my compoſures in
verſe written in younger life were led by thoſe
xamples unwarily into this track. But if I may
be permitted to ſpeak the ſenſe of maturer age, I
an hardly think this the happieſt language in
which Chriſtians ſhould generally diſcover their
warm ſentiments of religion, ſince the clearer and
more ſpiritual revelations of the New Teſtament.
Yet ſtill it muſt be owned, there are ſome ſouls fa-
voured with ſuch beatifying viſits from heaven,
nd raptured with ſuch a flame of divine affecti-
n, as more powerfully engages all animal nature
n their devotions, and conſtrains them to ſpeak
heir pureſt and moſt ſpiritual exerciſes in ſuch
athetic and tender expreſſions as may be perverſly

profaned

profaned by an unholy conſtruction. And the byas and propenſity towards this ſtyle is yet ſtronger, where early impreſſions of piety have been made on the heart by devout writings of this kind.

It ſhould be remembered alſo, there is nothing to be found here which riſes above our ideas; here are none of thoſe abſurd and incomprehenſible phraſes which amuſe the ear with ſounding vanity, and hold reaſon in ſovereign contempt: here are no viſionary ſcenes of wild extravagance, no affectations of the tumid and unmeaning ſtyle, which ſpreads a glaring confuſion over the underſtanding; nothing that leads the reader into the region of thoſe myſtical ſhadows and darkneſs which abound in the Romiſh writers, under the pretence of refined light and ſublime ecſtaſy. Nor is the character of this ingenious Author to be blemiſhed with any other reproaches which have been ſometimes caſt on ſuch ſort of meditations.

I know it hath been ſaid, that this language of rapture addreſſed to the Deity, is but a new track given to the flow of the ſofter powers, after the diſappointment of ſome meaner love; or at leaſt, 'tis owing to the want of a proper object and opportunity to fix thoſe tender paſſions: but this cannot be allowed to be the caſe here; for as Mrs. Rowe had been ſought early by ſeveral lovers, ſo ſhe ſpent ſeveral years of younger life in the connubial ſtate with a gentleman of ſuch accompliſhments and ſuch circumſtances, that he was well fitted to be a partner of her joys and cares.

I know alſo that this ſoft and paſſionate turn

of

of religious meditation has ſometimes been imputed to injuries and ill treatment in the marriage-ſtate, whereby the ſame affections are weaned from an undeſerving object, and poured out in amorous language upon an object ſupremely worthy and divine. But neither has this reproach any pretence in the preſent caſe: that happy pair had ſouls ſo near a kin to each other, that they preſevered in uncommon amity, and mutual ſatisfaction, ſo long as providence favoured him with life. 'Tis ſufficiently evident then, that in theſe meditations there is no ſecret painting after a mortal love in the language of devotion and piety.

Nor yet can it be objected, that it was any diſpliceence and peeviſhneſs toward other things round about her, that taught her to expreſs herſelf with ſuch contempt of the things of mortality, and all the gay and tempting ſcenes of the preſent ſtate ſhe was by no means ſour and morſe, and out of humour with the world, nor with her acquaintance that dwelt in it: ſhe often converſed freely with the gay and great, and was in high eſteem among perſons of rank and honour. But honour and rank among mortals, with all the ſcenes of gaiety and greatneſs, were little, deſpicable, and forgotten things, while in her devout moments, her eye and her heart were fixed on God, the ſupreme original of all excellency and all honour.

In common life ſhe was affable and friendly with perſons of every rank and degree; and in her latter years, as ſhe drew nearer to heaven, if ſhe avoided any thing, it was grandeur and public appearances

pearances on earth. But she never so concealed and abstracted herself from the society of any of her fellow-creatures, as to despise the meanest of her species. She was ever kind and compassionate to the distressed, and largely liberal to the indigent. Nor did she neglect the daily duties, of human life, under a vain imagination that she moved in a higher sphere, and was seraphically exalted above them.

In short, there is nothing in these papers that can justly support any such sort of censures, though men of corrupt minds may cover the Bible itself with slander and redicule. Let all such readers stand aloof, nor touch these sacred leaves, lest they polute them.

Though there is not one compleat copy of verses amongst all these transports of her soul, yet she ever carried with her a relish of poesy even into her sacred retirements. Sometimes she springs her flight from a line or two of verse, which her memory had impressed upon her heart: sometimes from the midst of her religious elevations she lights down upon a few lines of some modern poet, even Herbert as well as Milton, &c. though 'tis but seldom she cites their names. At other times the verses seem to be the effusion of her own rapturous thoughts in sudden melody and metre; or at least I know not whence the lines are copied: but she most frequently does me the honour to make use of some of my writings in verse in these holy meditations of the heart. Blessed be that God, who has so far favoured any thing my pen could produce, as to assist so sublime a devotion.

From

From the different appearance of the paper and ink in some of these pieces, as well as from the early transcripts of several of them among her friends, 'tis evident they were written in her younger days; others are of a much later original, though there is but one that bears a date, and that is April 30, 1735. They seem to have been penned at special seasons and occasions throughout the course of her life. A few of them bear the corrections or additions of her own pen, which discovers itself by a little difference of the hand-writing.

Though she was never tempted away from our common Christianity into the fashionable apostacies of the age; yet I am well informed from many hands, that in her later years she entered with more zeal and affection into some of the peculiar doctrines of the gospel: and 'tis evident that some of these devotional pieces have a more evangelic turn than others, and probably most of those were composed or corrected in the latter part of life. The opposition which has of late been made to some of these truths, gave occasion to her further search into them, and her zeal for them. However, I have placed these papers all as I found them pinned up in a wrapping paper, though 'tis evident, from plain circumstances, this is not the order in which they were written, nor is that of any great importance.

Though these writings give us the aspirations of a devout soul in her holy retirements, when she had no design to present the public with them; yet they did

did not want a great deal of adjuſtment or correction in order to ſee the light. The numbers and the titles are added by the publiſher, as well as the breaks and pauſes, which give a ſort of reſt to the reader's mind, and make the review more eaſy. Here and there a too venturous flight is a little moderated; ſometimes a meditation or a ſentence is compleated, which ſeemed very imperfect, or a ſhort line or two inſerted to introduce the ſence where the language ſeemed too abrupt, or the meaning too obſcure. Her ſoul had a large ſet of ideas in preſent view, which made every expreſſion ſhe uſed eaſy and perſpicuous to herſelf when ſhe wrote only for her own uſe; though ſometimes her entire ſenſe might not be quite ſo obvious to every reader, without a little introduction into her track of ſentiments: upon the whole, I muſt acknowledge I was very unwilling that this excellent work ſhould loſe any degrees of elegance or brightneſs by paſſing through my hands.

When the manuſcript came firſt under my reviſal, I read it over with the eye of a critic and a friend, that I might publiſh it with honour to the hand that wrote it, and with religious entertainment and advantage to the world: nor was this employment deſtitute of its proper ſatisfaction. But never did I feel the true pleaſure of theſe meditations, till I had finiſhed this labour of the head, and began to read them over again as devout exercises of the heart: *then I endeavoured to enter more entirely into the ſpirit of the pious Author, and attempted to aſſume her language as my own. But*

how

how much ſuperiour was the ſatisfaction which I received from this review, eſpecially wherſoever I had reaſon to hope I could pronounce her words with ſincerity of ſoul? How happily did this raiſe and entertain all my pleaſing paſſions, and gave me another ſort of delight, than the dry critical peruſal of them, in order to judge concerning their propriety? But I confeſs alſo, it was an abaſing and mortifying thought, when I found how often I was conſtraining to drop the ſublime expreſſion from my lips, or forbid my tongue to uſe it, becauſe my own attainments ſunk ſo far beneath thoſe ſacred elevations of ſpirit, and fell ſo far ſhort of thoſe tranſcendent degrees of divine affection and zeal.

Let me perſuade all thoſe that peruſe this book, to make the ſame experiment that I have done; and when they have ſhut out the world, and are reading in their retirements, let them try how far they can ſpeake this language, and aſſume theſe ſentiments as their own: and by aſpiring to follow them, may they find the ſame ſatisfaction and delight, or at leaſt learn the profitable leſſons of ſelf abaſement and holy ſhame: and may a noble and glorious ambition excite in their breaſts a ſacred zeal to emulate ſo illuſtrious an example. Whatſoever ardours of divine love have been kindled in a ſoul united to fleſh and blood, may alſo be kindled by the ſame influences of grace in other ſpirits, labouring under the ſame clogs and impediments.

But perhaps, it will be neceſſary here to give a caution to ſome humble Chriſtians, that they would not make theſe higher elevations of piety and holy

joy the test and standard by which to judge of the sincerity of their own religion. Ten thousand saints arrived safe at paradise, who have not been favoured like St Paul, with a rapture into the third heaven, nor could, ever arise to the affectionate transports, and devout joys of Mrs. Rowe: yet I hope all serious readers may find something here, which, though the aids of the blessed Spirit, may raise them above their usual pitch, may give a new spring to their religious pleasures, and their immortal hopes and thereby render their lives more holy and heavenly.

That the publication of this little book may be favoured with the divine blessing for this happy end, is the sincere desire and request of the publisher, as it was the real motive of the ingenious and pious writer, to commit them by my hand to the public view. This sufficiently discovers itself in the following letter.

BRITISH MUSEUM

— To the Reverend,

Dr. Watts, at *Newington.*

SIR,

THE opinion I have of your piety and iudgment, is the reaſon of my giving you the trouble of looking over theſe papers, in order to publiſh them; which I deſire you to do as ſoon as you can conveniently; only you have full liberty to ſuppreſs what you think proper.

I think there can be no vanity in this deſign, for I am ſenſible ſuch thoughts as theſe will not be for the taſte of the modiſh part of the world; and before they appear, I ſhall be entirely diſintereſted in the cenſure or applauſe of mortals.

The reflections were occaſionally written, and only for my own improvement: but I am not without hopes that they may have the ſame effect on ſome pious minds, as the reading the experiences of others have had on my own ſoul. The experimental part of religion has generally a greater influence than its theory; and if, when I am ſleeping in the duſt, theſe ſoliloquies ſhould kindle a flame of divine love in the heart of the loweſt and moſt deſpiſed Chriſtian, be the glory given to the great Spring of all grace and benignity.

I have now done with mortal things, and all to come is vaſt eternity—eternity—How tranſporting is the ſound! as long as God exiſts, my being and happineſs is ſecure. Theſe unbounded deſires, which the wide creation cannot limit, ſhall be ſatisfied for ever. I ſhall drink at the fountain-head of pleaſure, and be refreſhed with the emanations of original life and joy. I ſhall hear the voice of uncreated harmony ſpeaking peace and ineffable conſolation to my ſoul.

I expect eternal life, not as a reward *(of merit)* but a pure act of bounty. Deteſting myſelf in every view I can take, I fly to the righteouſneſs and atonement of my great Redeemer, for pardon and ſalvation; this is my only conſolation and hope. *Enter not into judgment, O Lord, with thy ſervant; for in thy ſight ſhall no fleſh be juſtified.*

Through the blood of the Lamb I hope for an entire victory over the laſt enemy; and that before this comes to you, I ſhall have reach'd the celeſtial heights; and while you are reading theſe lines, I ſhall be adoring before the throne of God, where faith ſhall be turn'd into viſion, and theſe languiſhing deſires ſatisfied with the full fruition of immortal love. *Adieu.*

ELIZ. ROWE.

THE

THE

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DEVOUT

DEVOUT EXERCISES OF THE HEART &c.

I. *Supreme love to GOD.*

WHY, O my God, must this mortal ſtructure put ſo great ſeparation between my ſoul and thee? I am ſurrounded with thy eſſence, yet I cannot perceive thee; I follow thee, and trace thy footſteps in heaven and earth, yet I cannot overtake thee; thou art before me, and I cannot reach thee, and behind me, and I perceive thee not.

O thou, whom unſeen, I love, by what powerful influence doſt thou attract my ſoul? The eye has not ſeen, nor the ear heard, nor has it enter'd into the heart of man to conceive what thou art; and yet I love thee beyond all that my eye has ſeen, or my ear heard, beyond all that my heart can comprehend. Thou dwelleſt in heights of glory, to which no human thoughts can ſoar, and yet thou art more near and intimate to my ſoul than any of the objects of ſenſe. Theſe ears have never heard thy

voice, and yet I am better acquainted with thee, and can rely on thee with more confidence than on the dearest friend I have on earth.

My heart cleaves to thee, O Lord, as its only refuge, and finds in thee a secret and constant spring of consolation. I speak to thee with the utmost confidence, and think thy being my greatest happiness. The reflection on thy existence and greatness recreates my spirits, and fills my heart with alacrity; my soul overflows with pleasure, I rejoice, I triumph in thy independent blessedness, and absolute dominion. Reign, O my God, for ever, glorious and uncontroul'd.

I, a worm of the earth, would join my assent with the infinite orders above, with all thy flaming ministers who rejoice in thy kingdom and glory.

Tho' not with them, thy happier race, allow'd
To view the bright unveil'd divinity;
(By no audacious glance from mortal eyes,
Those mystic glories are to be prophan'd)
But yet I feel the same immortal flame,
And love thee, tho' unseen.

I love thee—Thus far I can speak, but all the rest is unutterable; and I must leave the pleasing tale untold till I can talk in the language of immortality: and then I'll begin the transporting story, which shall never come to an end, but be still and still beginning: for thy beauties, O thou fairest of ten thousand,

thouſand, will ſtill be new, and ſhall kindle freſh ardour in my ſoul to all eternity. The ſacred flame ſhall riſe, nor find any limits till thy perfections find a period.

I love thee, and O thou that knoweſt all things, read the characters that love has drawn on my heart: what excellence but thine in heaven and earth could raiſe ſuch aſpirations of ſoul, ſuch ſublime and fervent affections as thoſe I feel? What could fix my ſpirit but boundleſs perfection? What is there elſe for whoſe ſake I could deſpiſe all created glory? Why am I not at reſt here among ſenſible enjoyments? Whence ariſe theſe importunate longings, theſe infinite deſires? Why does not the complete creation ſatisfy, or at leaſt delude me with a dream of happineſs? Why do not the objects of ſenſe awake a more ardent ſentiment than things diſtant and inviſible? Why ſhould I, who *ſay to corruption, Thou art my father*, aſpire after an union with the immenſe divinity?

You angels of God, that behold his face, explain to me the ſacred myſtery; tell me how this heavenly flame began, unriddle its wondrous generation: who hath animated this mortal frame with celeſtial fire, and given a clod of earth this divine ambition? What could kindle it but the breath of God, which kindled up my ſoul? And to thee, its amiable

amiable original, it aſcends; it breaks throug all created perfection, and keeps on its reſt leſs courſe to the firſt pattern of beauty.

Ye flowry varieties of the earth, and yo ſparkling glories of the ſkies, your blandiſh ments are vain, while I purſue an excellenc that caſts a reproach on all your glory. would fain cloſe my eyes on all the variou and lovely appearances you preſent, an would open them on a brighter ſcene. have deſires which nothing viſible can grati fy; to which no material things are ſuitable O when ſhall I find objects more entirely a greeable to my intellectual faculties? My ſoul ſprings forward in purſuit of a diſtant good, whom I follow by ſome faint ray o light, which only glimmers by ſhort inter- vals before me. Oh when will it diſperſe the clouds, and break out in full ſplendor on my ſoul.

But what will the open viſion of thy beauties effect, if, while thou art but faintly imagined, I love thee with ſuch a facred fervour? To what bleſſed heights ſhall my admiration riſe, when I ſhall behold thee in full perfection; when I ſhall ſee thee as thou art, exalted in majeſty, and complete in beau- ty? How ſhall I triumph then in thy glory, and in the privileges of my own being? What ineffable thoughts will riſe to find my- ſelf united to the all-ſufficient divinity, by

ties

ies which the ſons of men have no names o expreſs, by an engagement that the re-olution of eternal years ſhall not diſſolve? The league of nature ſhall be broken, and the aws of the mingled elements be cancell'd; ut my relation to the Almighty God ſhall tand fixed and unchangeable as his own xiſtence: *Nor life, nor death, nor angels, nor rincipalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, or things to come, ſhall ever ſeparate me from is love.*

Triumph, O my ſoul, and rejoice; look orward beyond the period of all terreſtrial hings: look beyond ten thouſand ages of celeſtial bleſſedneſs, look forward ſtill, and ake an immeaſurable proſpect; preſs on nd leave unnumber'd ages behind, ages of neffable peace and pleaſure; plunge at once nto the ocean of bliſs, and call eternity it-elf thy own.

There are no limits to the proſpect of my oy; it runs parallel with the duration of he infinite divinity: my bliſs is without ounds; O when ſhall the full poſſeſſion of t commence?

II. *The truth and goodneſs of GOD.*

ENgrav'd as in eternal braſs,
The mighty promiſe ſhines;
Nor can the powers of darkneſs raze
Theſe everlaſting lines.

The

The ſacred word of grace is ſtrong
As that which built the ſkies:
The voice that rolls the ſtars along
Speaks all the promiſes.

And they all are built on the immutable truth and goodneſs of thy nature: thou doſt not ſpeak at random like vain man; but whatever thou haſt engag'd to perform, is the reſult of eternal counſel and deſign. Thou haſt utter'd nothing that thou canſt ſee occaſion to alter on a ſecond review: thou can'ſt promiſe nothing to thy own damage, nor be a loſer by the utmoſt liberality. Thou art every way qualified to make good thy engagements by the fulneſs of thy riches and power.

Nor haſt thou any neceſſity to flatter thy creatures, or to ſay kinder things to them than thou meaneſt to fulfil. Miſerable man can bring no advantage to thee, nor has he any thing to claim from thee. By what benefit has he prevented thee? By what right can he demand the leaſt of thy favours? Thy engagements are all free and unconſtrain'd, founded on thy own beneficence, and not on the merits of thy creature. While I conſider this, my expectations riſe, I ſet no limits to my hopes: I look up with confidence, and call thee *my Father;* and with a humble faith, I claim every advantage that tender name imports. My heart confides in

n thee with ſtedfaſtneſs and alacrity; fear nd diſtruſt are inconſiſtent with my thoughts of the beneficence of thy nature.

Every name and attribute by which thou haſt revealed thyſelf to man, confirms my aith: thy life, thy being is engaged: I may s well queſtion thy exiſtence, as thy faithfulneſs: as ſure as thou art, thou art juſt and rue. The proteſtations of the moſt faithful friend I have, cannot give me half the onſolation that thy promiſes give me I ear vain man with diffidence, I bid my ſoul eware of truſting falſe mortality; but I ear thy voice with joy and full aſſurance.

Thy words are not writ in ſand, nor ſcatered by the fleeting winds; but ſhall ſtand n force when heaven and earth ſhall be no nore. Eternal ages ſhall not diminiſh their fficacy, nor alter what the mouth of the ord hath ſpoken. I believe, I believe with he moſt perfect aſſent: I know that *thou rt, and that thou art a Rewarder of them hat diligently ſeek thee*; I feel the evidence, or thou haſt not left thyſelf without witeſs in my heart.

III. *Longing after the enjoyment of God.*

MY God, to thee my ſighs aſcend, every complaint I make, ends with thy ame: I pauſe, I dwell on the ſound, I ſpeak

ſpeak it over again, and find that all my care begin and end in thee. I long to behold the ſupreme beauty, I pant for the fair Origina of all that is lovely, for beauty that is ye unknown, and for intellectual pleaſures ye untaſted.

My heart aſpires, my wiſhes fly beyon the bounds of creation, and deſpiſe all tha mortality can preſent me with. I was formd for celeſtial joys, and find myſelf capable o the entertainments of angels. Why may not begin my heaven below, and taſte a leaſt of the ſprings of pleaſure that flow fro thy right-hand for ever.

Should I drink my fill, thoſe fountains ar ſtill exhauſtleſs; millions of happy ſou quench their infinite deſires there: millio of happy orders of beings gaze on thy bea ty, and are made partakers of thy bleſſedneſ but thou art ſtill undiminiſhed. No liber lity can waſte the ſtore of thy perfection it has flowed from eternity, and runs for e ver freſh, and why muſt I periſh for want.

My thirſty ſoul pines for the waters o life; Oh! who will refreſh me with th pleaſurable draught? How long ſhall I wa der in this deſart land, where every pro pect is waſte and barren? I look roun in vain, and ſigh ſtill unſatisfied: Oh! wh will lead me to the ſtill waters, and ma me repoſe in green paſtures, where the wea

are for ever at rest? How tedious are the hours of expectation?

Come, Lord, my head doth burn my heart is sick,
While thou dost ever, ever stay;
Thy long deferring wounds me to the quick,
My spirit gaspeth night and day:
O shew thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

Dispatch thy commission; give me my work and activity to perform it, and let me as a hireling fulfil my day. Lord, 'tis enough: *What am I better than my fathers?* They are dead, and I am mortal.

I'm but a stranger and a pilgrim here
In these wild regions; wand'ring and forlorn;
Restless and sighing for my native home,
Longing to reach my weary space of life,
And to fulfil my task. Oh! haste the hour
Of joy and sweet repose. Transporting hope!

Lord, here I am waiting for thy commands, attending thy pleasure; O speak and incline my ear to hear; give me my work, let me finish it, and gain my dismission from this body of sin and death; this hated clog of error and guilt, of corruption and vanity. Oh! let me drop this load, and bid these scenes of guilt a final adieu.

I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord; when wilt thou let me into thy holy habitation? How long shall I pine at this distance

from thee? What can I speak to shew thee my pain, to utter my anguish, when I fear the loss of my God? Oh! speak an assuring word, and confirm my hope,

Transporting moment! when wilt thou appear,
To crown my hopes, and banish all my fear?

Again, O my father, and my eternal friend, I breath out my requests to thee in this land of fatigue and folly: what is this life but a sorry tiresome round, a circle of repeated vanities? Happiness has been never seen in it since sin and folly entered: all is empty appearance, or vain labour, or painful vexation.

Suffic'd with life, my languid spirits faint,
And fain would be at rest. Oh! let me enter
Those sacred seats, and after all the toil
Of life, begin an everlasting Sabbath.

Yet again, O Lord, I ask leave to tell thee, *I have waited for thy salvation*, and hourly languished after the habitations of my God. My heart grows sick, and I almost expire under these delays: what have I here to keep me from thee? What to relieve the tedious hours of absence? I have pronounced all below the sun, vanity and vexation, all insipid and burdensome. Amidst health and plenty, friends and reputation, thou art my only joy, my highest wish, and my supreme delight. On thee my soul

fixed

fixes all her hopes; there I reſt in a ceſtial calm! Oh! let it not be broken with earthly objects; let me live unmoleſted with the cares or delights of ſenſe.

Oh! let me flee
From all the world, and live alone to Thee.

IV. *GOD my ſupreme, my only hope.*

WHY do I addreſs thee, my God, with no more confidence? Why do I indulge theſe remains of unbelief, and harbour theſe returns of infidelity and diſtruſt? Can I ſurvey the earth, can I gaze on the ſtructure of the heavens, and aſk if thou art able to deliver? Can I call in queſtion thy ability to ſuccour me, when I conſider the general and particular inſtances of thy goodneſs and power? One age to another, in long ſucceſſion, hath conveyed the records of thy glory; *in all my generations thou haſt been our dwelling-place; my fathers truſted in thee and were delivered.* They have encouraged me, my own experience has encouraged me to truſt in thee for ever.

The ſun may fail to riſe, and men in vain expect its light; but thy truth, thy faithfulneſs cannot fail: the courſe of nature may be reverſed, and all be chaos again; but thou art immutable, and can'ſt not by any change deceive the hopes of them that truſt

in thee. I adore thy power, and subscribe to thy goodness and fidelity, and what farther objection would my unbelief raise? Is any thing too hard for God to accomplish? Can the united force of earth and hell resist his will?

Great God, how wide thy glories shine!
How broad thy kingdom, how divine!
Nature and miracle, and fate and chance are thine.

Therefore I apply myself immediately to thee, and renounce all the terror and all the confidence that may arise from heaven or earth besides.

Not from the dust my joys or sorrows spring:
Let all the baleful planets shed
Their mingled curses round my head;
Their mingled curses I despise,
Let but the great, th' eternal king,
Look thro' the clouds, and bless me with his eyes.

Let him bless me, and I shall be blessed; blessed without reserve or limitation; blessed in my going out, and coming in; in my sitting down and rising up; blessed in time, and blessed to all eternity. That blessing from thy lips will influence the whole creation, and attend me wherever I am. It shall go before me as a leading light, and follow me as my protecting angel. When I lay down, it will cover me, I shall rest beneath

neath the ſhadow of the moſt High, and dwell ſafely in the ſecrets of his tabernacle.

Thy kingdom ruleth over all, O Lord, and thou *doſt according to thy will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth:* I confeſs and acknowlege thy providence. The ways of men are not at his own diſpoſal, but all his goings are ordered by thee; all events are in thy hands, and thou only canſt ſucceed or diſappoint his hopes. If thou blow on his deſigns, they are for ever blaſted; if thou bleſs them neither earth nor hell can hinder their ſucceſs: therefore I apply myſelf immediately to thee; for not all created power can aſſiſt me without thee.

Hence from my heart, ye idols, flee,
Ye ſounding names of vanity!
No more my tongue ſhall ſacrifice.
To chance and nature, tales and lies; (plies.
Creatures without a God can yield me no ſup-

Not all the power of men on earth, nor angel, nor ſaint in heaven, can help or relieve me in the leaſt exigence, if my God hide himſelf and ſtand afar off from me. Second cauſes are all at thy direction, and cannot aid me till commiſſioned by thee.

Lord, when my thoughtful ſoul ſurveys
Fire, air and earth, and ſtars and ſeas,
I call them all thy ſlaves;
Commiſſion'd by my Father's will,

Poisons shall cure, or balm shall kill;
Vernal sins, or Zephyrs breath
May burn or blast the plants to death
That sharp December saves.
What can winds or planets boast,
But a precarious power?
The sun is all in darkness lost,
Frost shall be fire, and fire be frost,
When he appoints the hour.

At thy command nature and necessity are no more; all things are alike easy to God: speak but thou the word, and my desires are granted: say, *Let there be light*, and there shall be light. Thou canst look me in peace, when the tumult of thoughts raise a storm within. Bid my soul be still, and all its tempest shall obey thee.

I depend only on thee; do thou smile, and all the world may frown: do thou succeed my affairs, and I shall fear no obstacle that earth or hell can put in my way. Thou only art the object of my fear, and all my desires are directed to thee.

Human things have lost their being and their names, and vanish into nothing before thee: they are but shades and disguise to vail the active divinity. Oh! let me break through all these separations, and see and confess the great, the governing cause. Let no appearance of created things, however specious, hide thee from my view: let me look through all to thee, nor cast a glance

of

f love or hope below thee. With a holy ontempt let me survey the ample round f the creation, as lying in the hollow of thy and, and every being in heaven and on arth as unmoveable, by the most potent ause in nature, till commissioned by thee o do me good or hurt. Oh! let thy hand e with me to keep me from evil, and let e abide under the shadow of the Almigh-y: I shall be secure in thy pavilion. To hee I fly for shelter from all the ill of mor-lity.

V. *GOD a present help, and ever near.*

THou wast found of me, O my God, when I sought thee not, and wilt thou y me when I seek thee? Am I giving my reath to the wind, and scattering my peti-ons in the air? Is it a vain thing to call up-n God? And is there no profit in crying e the Almighty? *Art thou a God afar off, nd not near at hand?* Is there any place xempt from thy presence? any distance hence my cries cannot reach thee? Can ny darkness hide me from thy eyes? Or there a corner of the creation unvisited y thee? Dost thou not fill heaven and earth, nd am I not surrounded by thy immensi-y?

Are my desires unknown to thee? Or is here a thought in my heart concealed from thee?

thee? Doſt not thou that haſt formed th ear, hear? Canſt thou forget the work o thine own hand? Or retired far in the he vens, full of thine own happineſs, canſt tho leave thy creation to miſery and diſorde helpleſs and hopeleſs? Are the ways of m at his own diſpoſal, and his paths undirect by thee? Is calling on the living God n more than worſhipping a dumb idol? Can thou, like them, diſappoint and mock th adorers?

Art thou unacquainted with the extent o thy own power, that thou ſhouldſt promi beyond thy ability to perform? Or art tho *as a man that ſhouldſt lie, or the Son of ma that ſhouldſt repent?* Is thy faithfulneſs u certain, and thy power precarious? A thoſe perfections imaginary for which me adore thee, and thy gracious names inſigni cant titles? Do the *children of men* in va *put their truſt under the ſhadow of thy wing* Art not thou *a preſent help in the time of tro ble*, and is there no ſecurity in the ſecr places of the Moſt High? Whither the ſhall I look in my diſtreſs? To whom ſha I direct my prayer? From whom ſhall expect relief, if there is no help in God fo me?

But, Oh! what unrighteouſneſs have m fathers ever found in thee? What injuſtic can I charge thee with? What breach o truth, or want of pity? Have the records o

th

actions ever been ſtained with the breach faithfulneſs? Art thou not my only hope, my long experienced ſupport? Have I r found help from the creatures when u haſt failed me? Have I, or can I have, reater certainty than thy word to de- nd on? Can any other power defend or iver like thee? Thou art *a rock and thy rk is perfect*, for *all thy ways are judg- nt: a God of truth and without iniquity, juſt d right art thou.* With my laſt breath I ll witneſs to thy truth and faithfulneſs, and clare thy goodneſs to the children of men.

VI. *God an all-ſufficient good, and my only happineſs.*

WHY is my heart ſo far from thee,
My God, my chief delight?
Why are my thoughts no more by day
With thee, no more by night?
Why ſhould my fooliſh paſſions rove?
Is here can ſuch ſweetneſs be
As I have taſted in thy love,
As I have found in thee?

Where can I hope to meet ſuch joys as y ſmiles have given me? Where can pleaſure ſo ſincere and unallayed? When have enjoyed the light of thy countenance, d the ſenſe of thy love, has not all my ul been filled? Have I found any want

or

or emptineſs? Has there been any ro
left for deſire, or any proſpect beyond,
ſides the more perfect enjoyment of
God? Have not all the glories of the wo
been darkened, and turned into black
and deformity? How poor, how conte
tible have they appeared? Or rather, h
they not all diſappeared and vaniſhed
dreams and ſhadows in the noon of d
and under the blaze of ſun-beams?

I have never found ſatisfaction in a
thing but in God; why then do I wand
from him? Why do I leave the fountain
living waters for broken ciſterns? Why
I abandon the full ocean in ſearch of ſh
low ſtreams? What account can I give
folly like this? I can promiſe myſelf n
thing from the creature; thoſe expectatio
ſhall deceive me no more. 'Tis thou,
God, thou art the only object of my hop
and deſires; 'tis thou only that canſt ma
me happy.

If thou frown, my being is a curſe:
indignation is hell with all its terrors. L
me never feel that, and I defy all thin
elſe to make me miſerable, I ſeem ind
pendent on all nature, to thee only I app
myſelf. Hear me, thou beneficent auth
of my being, thou ſupport of my life,
thee I direct my wiſhes, thoſe deſires wh
thou wilt approve, while I aſk but the ha
pin

eſs I was created to enjoy. Oh! fix all expectation on thee, and free me from levity and inconſtancy.

Look gently down, Almighty grace,
Priſon me round in thy embrace:
Pity the heart that would be thine,
And let thy power my love confine,

uffer me never to ſtart from thee; ſuch confinement were ſweeter than liberty: *y yoke is eaſy, and thy burthen light.* I ll bleſs the chain that binds me to thee. ! give me ſuch a view of thy beauty as ll fix my volatile heart for ever; ſuch a w as ſhall determine all its motions, and a conſtant conviction how unreaſonable s to wander from thee.

Is it that I reliſh any thing beyond thy e? Oh! no, I appeal even to thee, who ſt not be deceived, and knoweſt the in- ſt ſecrets of my ſoul: thou knoweſt ere the balance of my love falls, and that wandrings are not deliberate: that 'tis t by choice that I forſake thee. I grieve, ight for my folly; wouldſt thou forgive , I can never forgive myſelf, for I know inexcuſable.

I want nothing when I am poſſeſſed of e; without thee I want all things. Thou the center of all my paſſions; I have hope but what is thine, no joy but what ws from thee; my greateſt fears are

thoſe

thoſe of loſing thee; my inmoſt care is ſecure thy favour. This is the ſubject my deepeſt anxiety: every ſigh I brea ends in my name, and that loved name lone allays every anguiſh of my ſoul, calms its wildeſt tempeſts.

From thy frowns or favours all my j or ſorrows ſpring; thy frowns can make infinitely miſerable, thy favour can make infinitely bleſſed. I can defy hell. ſmile in the face of death, while I can thee *mine*. My God! ſtill let me bleſs ſound, and part with all things rather renounce my property in thee: let me it to my laſt breath, and claim it with expiring ſighs.

Secure of thee nothing can terrify ſoul; all is peaceful and ſerene within, nal love and immortal pleaſure: I deſire more; imagination ſtops here, and all wiſhes are loſt in eternal plenty.—— God! more cannot be aſked, and with I ſhould be infinitely miſerable. The ki doms of the ſkies ſhould not buy my to thee and thy love: the bleſſedneſs of creatures is complete here, for God h ſelf is bleſſed in himſelf for ever.

What can I add, for all my words are fai
Celeſtial love no eloquence can paint?
No more can be in mortal ſound expreſs'd
But vaſt eternity ſhall tell the reſt.

VII. *A covenant with GOD.*

INcomprehenſible being, who *ſearcheſt the heart, and trieſt the reins of the children of men*, thou knoweſt my ſincerity, and my thoughts are all unveiled to thee; I am ſurrounded with thine immenſity; thou art a preſent, though inviſible witneſs of the ſolemn affair I am now engaged in. I am now *taking hold of thy ſtrength, that I may make peace with thee*, and entering into articles with the Almighty God: theſe are the happy days long ſince predicted, when *one ſhall ſay, I am the Lord's and another ſhall call himſelf by the name of Iſrael, and another ſhall ſubſcribe with his hand to the Lord*; and *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my ſons and my daughters, ſaith the Lord Jehovah.*

With the moſt thankful ſincerity I take hold on this covenant, as 'tis more fully manifeſted and explained in thy goſpel by *Jeſus Chriſt*; and humbly accepting thy propoſals, I bind myſelf to thee by a ſacred and everlaſting obligation. By a free and deliberate action, I do here ratify the articles which were made for me in my baptiſm in the name of the Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit; I religiouſly devote myſelf to thy ſervice, and entirely ſubmit to thy conduct. I renounce the glories and vanities of the world, and chuſe thee as my happi-

neſs, my ſupreme felicity and everlaſting portion. I make no article with thee for any thing beſides: deny or give me what thou wilt, I will never repine while my principal treaſure is ſecure. This is my deliberate, my free and ſincere determination; a determination, which, by thy grace, I will never retract.

Oh! thou, by whoſe power alone I ſhall be able to ſtand, *Put thy fear in my heart, that I may never depart from thee:* let not the world, with all its flatteries, nor death, nor hell, with all their terrors, force me to violate this ſacred vow. Oh! let me never live to abandon thee, nor draw the impious breath that would deny thee.

And now let ſurrounding angels witneſs for me, that I ſolemnly devote all the powers and faculties of my ſoul to thy ſervice; and when I preſumptuouſly employ any of the advantages thou haſt given me to thy diſhonour, let them teſtify againſt me, and let my own words condemn me.

Eliſ. Rowe.

Thus have I ſubſcribed to thy gracious propoſals, and engaged myſelf to be thy Lords: and now let the malice of men, and the rage of devils, combine againſt me, I can defy all their ſtratagems; for *God* himſelf is become my friend, *Jeſus* is my all-ſufficie

ficient Saviour, and the *Spirit of God*, I truſt, will be my ſanctifier and my comforter.

O happy day! tranſporting moment! the brighteſt period of my life! heaven with all its light ſmiles on me what glorious mortal can now excite my envy; what ſcene to tempt my ambition can the whole creation diſplay? Let glory call me with her exalted voice; let pleaſure with a ſofter eloquence allure me; the world, in all ſplendor appears but a trifle, while the infinite God is my portion. He is mine by as ſure a title as eternal veracity can confer; the right is unqueſtionable, the conveyance unalterable. The mountains ſhall be removed, and the hills be diſſolved, before the everlaſting obligation ſhall be cancelled.

VIII. *A thank-offering for ſaving grace.*

BLeſs the Lord, O my ſoul, and all that is within me bleſs his holy name: bleſs the Lord, and forget not all his beneſits, who redeemed thy life from deſtruction, and crowneth thee with loving kindneſs and tender mercy; who brought thee out of the mire and clay, and ſet thy feet upon a rock; who broke thy fetters, and freed thee from the miſerable bondage of ſin. I lay, a wretched ſlave, pleaſed with my chains, and fond of my captivity fatally deluded and undone, till love, almighty love, reſcued me. Bleſt ef-

fect of unmerited grace! I ſhall ſtand for ever an illuſtrious inſtance of boundleſs mercy: to that I muſt entirely aſcribe my ſalvation, and thro' all the ages of eternity I'll rehearſe the wonders of redeeming love, and tell to liſtening angels what it has done for my ſoul.

I'll ſing the endleſs miracles of love;
For ever that my lofty theme ſhall prove.

My glorious Creator, why did I employ thy thoughts before I had a being? Why from all eternity was an immortality deſigned me and my birth allotted me in a land illuminated with the rays of ſacred light? I might have been invoking the powers of hell with deteſtable ceremonies, inſtead of adoring the omnipotent God. But when thouſands are loſt in theſe deluſions why am I thus graciouſly diſtinguiſhed? Inſtead of being born among the ſhameful vices of impious parents, and an heir to their curſes, why am I entitled to the bleſſing of religious anceſtors? Why, when I was incapable of choice, was I devout to the God that *keeps covenant and mercy to a thouſand generations of them that fear him?*

Why, when I knew thee not, didſt thou ſuſtain me? But oh! why, when I knew thee, and rebelled againſt thee, why didſt thou ſo long ſuffer my ingratitude? Why did thy watchful providence perpetually ſurround

and me, croſſing all the methods I took
undo myſelf? Why was I not curſt with
y own wiſhes, and left to the quiet poſ-
ſion of thoſe vanities I delighted in, thoſe
ys which I fooliſhly preferred to all the
eaſures of thy love? Why did thou purſue
e with the offers of thy favour when I fled
ee with ſuch averſion; and had fled thee
r ever, if thou hadſt not compelled me to
turn.

Why did thy Spirit ſtrive ſo long with an
ſtinate heart, which reſiſted all its motions,
d turned thy patience and long-ſuffering
to provocation and guilt? Why am I not
ndone by thoſe pleaſing ſnares in which I
ve ſeen ſo many deluded wretches periſh?
ike them I deſpiſe the unſearchable riches
f thy grace; with them I had been con-
nt ro ſhare the ſorry portion and pleaſures
f this world if thou hadſt let me alone, and
ſhould never have enquired after thee but
hy waſt thou found of one that ſought
ee not? O why, but *becauſe thou wilt be merciful to whom thou be merciful?*

Therefore again with aſtoniſhment and
elight I look back on the methods of thy
race, and again I conſider myſelf loſt in an
yſs of ſin and miſery; when there was
o eye to pity me, no hand but thine to
ſiſt me, thou madeſt it then the time of
ve. Never was grace more free and ſur-
izing than thine is; never was there a
ore obſtinate heart than mine? and never

ſuch unconquerable love as thine. How glorioufly has it triumphed over my rebellious faculties? How freely has it cancelled all my guilt?

Could I have made the leaſt pretence to merit, or have challenged any thing from thee, the benefit had been leſs exalted; had there been any foundation for human pride, my corrupt heart would ſoon have taken the advantage, and have robbed thee of thy honour, by aſcribing the glorious work to the ſtrength of my own reaſon, or a natural tendency to virtue; but here my vanity is for ever ſilenced. I am loſt in the bounded abyſs. O height! O depth! O length and breadth unmeaſurable! *How unſearchable are thy ways*, Almighty love, *and thy paths paſt finding out?*

Let me here begin my eternal ſong, and aſcribe *ſalvation and honour*, dominion and majeſty, *to him that ſits on the throne, and to the Lamb for ever*, who has loved me and ranſomed me with his blood; ranſomed me from a voluntary bondage, from the moſt vile and hopeleſs captivity, a captivity from which nothing but that invaluable purchaſe could have redeemed me.

" *Infinite love! Almighty grace!*
" *Stand in amaze, ye rolling ſkies:*

Bring hither your celeſtial harps, ye beneficent beings, who amidſt the height of your happineſs expreſs a kind regard for man

tea

teach me the language of paradiſe, the ſtrains of immortality. But oh! 'tis all too feeble, the tongues of ſeraphims cannot utter what I owe my Redeemer: from what miſery, my adorable Saviour, haſt thou reſcued me? From error, from ſin, from ſnares and death, from infernal chains, eternal horror, and the blackneſs of darkneſs for ever.

Nor here my glorious benefactor ſtayed; but ſtill went on to magnify the riches of his grace, and entitled me to an endleſs inheritance, and an immortal crown; to the fruition of God, and the unutterable joys that flow from his preſence.

Myſterious depths of boundleſs love
My admiration raiſe:
O God, thy name exalted ſtands
Above my higheſt praiſe.

IX. *Evidence of ſincere love to GOD.*

IF I love thee not, my bleſſed God, I know not what I love; if I am uncertain of this, I am uncertain of my exiſtence: if I love thee not, what is the meaning of theſe pathetic expreſſions, *My God my All!* thou ſpring of my life, and fountain of my happineſs! my great reward, and my exceeding joy! the eternal object of my love, and ſupreme felicity of my nature! does not my heart attend my lips in all this language?

guage? How can this be, if my soul does not love thee?

O my God, if I love thee not, what is the meaning of this constant uneasiness at thy absence? From whence proceeds this painful anxiety of mind about thy love, and all these intense, these restless desires after thee? Why are all the satisfactions of life insipid without thee? Without my God what are riches, and honours, and pleasures to me? I should esteem the possession of the world but a trifle, or rather my eternal damage, if it must be purchased with the loss of thy favour. Thy benignity is better than life, and the moments in which I enjoy a sense of thy love are the only happy intervals of my life. 'Tis then I live; 'tis then I am truly blessed: 'tis then I look down with contempt on the little amusements of the world, and pity them that want a taste for these exalted pleasures.

How calm, how peaceful in those seasons are all the regions of my soul! I have enough, I ask no more. Can they languish for the stream who drink at the overflowing fountain? I have all the world, and more; I have heaven itself in thee: in thee I am completely and securely blessed, and can defy the malice of earth and hell to shake the foundation of my happiness, while thou dost whisper thy love to my soul. O blessed stability of heart! O sublime satisfaction!

ſt thou not told me that thou art mine
an inviolable engagement, when my ſoul
voted itſelf ſincerely to thee? Does not
y word aſſure me, *That the mountains ſhall*
part, and the hills be removed, but thy kind-
ſs ſhall not depart, nor the covenant of thy
ace be broken?

Haſt not thou terminated my wiſhes, O
ord, in thyſelf, and fixed my wandring
ſires? Is it for riches or honour, for length
days, or pleaſure, that I follow thee with
ily importunities? Thou knoweſt theſe
e not the ſubject of my reſtleſs petitions:
I ever balance theſe toys with thy fa-
our? Oh no: one ſmile of thine obſcures
their glory. When thou doſt bleſs my
tired devotions with thy preſence, I can
ink all created beauty into blackneſs.
hen I meet thee in my ſolitary contemp-
tions, with what contempt do I look back
n the leſſening world?

How dazling is thy beauty! how divine!
How dim the luſtre of the world to thine!

How dull are its entertainments to the
eaſure of converſing with thee? Oh ſtay,
thoſe happy moments, cries my ſatisfied
ul:

Stay, my beloved, with me here:
Stay till the morning-ſtar appear;
Stay till the duſky ſhadows fly
Before the day's illuſtrious eye.

Oh!

Oh! ſtay till the gloomy night of life
paſt, and eternity dawn on my ſoul. There
nothing in this barren place to entertain
when thou art gone: I can reliſh nothi
below after theſe celeſtial banquets.

If I love thee not, what's the meaning
this impatience to be with thee? *My ſo
longeth, yea fainteth, for the courts of th
Lord; when ſhall I come and appear befo
thee? Oh! that I had the wings of a do
for then would I fly away and be at reſt.*

X. *Aſſurance of ſalvation in* CHRIST JESU

I Have put my treaſure, my immortal pa
into thy hands, Oh! my dear Redee
er, and *ſhall the prey be taken from the migh
ty?* Shall a ſoul conſecrated to thee fal
ſacrifice to hell?

Bleſſed God, am I not thine? and ſha
the temple of thy Spirit be profaned, an
the lips that have ſo often aſcrib'd dominio
and glory, and majeſty to thee, be defil
with infernal blaſphemy, and the execra
ons of the damned? Shall the ſparks
divine love be extinguiſhed, and immort
enmity ſucceed? And ſhall I, who w
once bleſſed with thy favour, become th
object of thy wrath and indignation? Sha
all the mighty things thou haſt done for m
ſoul be forgotten? Shall all my vows, an
thy own ſacred engagements be cancelled

'Tis all impoſſible; for *thou art not as man, that thou ſhouldſt lie; nor as the ſon of man, that thou ſhouldſt repent.*

Thou art engaged by my own tremendous name for my ſecurity: my God, and my father's God, from generation to generation thou haſt been our dwelling-place. I was devoted to thee in baptiſm by the ſolemn vows of my religious parents: my infant hands were early lifted up to thee, and I ſoon learned to know and acknowledge the God of my fathers. I have actually ſubſcribed with my hand to the Lord, and am thine by the moſt voluntary and deliberate obligations. The portion of Jacob is my joyful choice, nor need I fear loſing it while thy word is eſtabliſhed as the heavens.

The Lord, who made heaven, earth and ſea,
And all that they contain,
Will never quit his ſtedfaſt truth,
Nor make his promiſe vain.

Were my dependance on myſelf, I were undone: the firſt temptation would ſhake my reſolutions; I ſhould ſell the ineſtimable riches of thy love for a trifle, and fool away immortal pleaſures for the joys of a moment; a ſpecious deluſion would ſeduce me from all my hopes of a glorious futurity. I ſhall fall a victim to my own folly, and muſt inevitably periſh, if thou forſake me:

but

but the ſtrength of Iſrael is my hope, mighty one of Jacob my defence.

Thou art the Rock of ages; the fi and immutable divinity is my high To and my Refuge, my Redeemer and Almi ty Saviour. Theſe were the bleſſed, glorious titles by which thou didſt at firſt ſure my doubtful ſoul, theſe were the tra porting names I knew and called thee b and thou haſt anſwered them through all changes of my life.

I was thy early care; thou didſt ſupp my helpleſs infancy, and art the watch guide of my unſteady youth. Which w ſoever I turn, I meet thy mercy, and tr thy providence; and as long as I live I record thy benefits, and depend on truth; thoſe benefits which have conſta ly purſued me, and that truth which has ver deceived me, and is engaged never abandon me. Tranſporting aſſurance! w further ſecurily can I aſk? Wh t ſecurity c I wiſh beyond eternal veracity? *The mo tains ſhall depart, and the hils be remo but thy kindneſs ſhall not depart, nor the co nant of thy peace be broken;* that coven which has been ſealed by the blood of t Son of God, and in that holy ſacrament have received the pledges of thy love. Th didſt graciouſly invite me into that comm nion, and meet me there with the moſt merited favour.

Fear not, sayest thou, poor trembling soul, I am thy Redeemer and thy mighty Saviour, the hope of Israel, and in my name shall all the nations of the earth be blessed: *I am gracious and merciful, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth:* these are the titles by which I have revealed myself to men; I came the expected Messiah, the Star of Jacob, and the glory of the Gentiles; I came from the fulness of ineffable glory, in the form of man, to redeem the race of Adam, I am willing and able to save, and *whosoever comes to me, I will in no wise cast away.* Fear not, I had kind designs towards thee from eternity; and by these visible signs of my body and blood, I seal my love to thy soul: take here the pledges of heaven, the assurances of everlasting happiness.

'Tis enough, replyed my transported soul; divide the world as thou wilt, let others unenvyed share its glory; thy love is all I crave. I am blessed with that assurance, I am surrounded with the joys of paradise; every place is a heaven, while my beloved is mine, and I am his.

If all the monarchs, whose command supreme
Divides the wide dominion of his ball,
Should offer each his boasted diadem,
I would not quit thy favour for them all:
These trifles with contempt I would resign;
The world's a toy while I can call thee MINE.

Let God and angels witneſs for me, that I renounce the world, and chuſe thy love as my portion; witneſs that I ſacrifice my darling ſins to thee, and from this moment ſolemnly devote myſelf to thy ſervice.

Thus did I engage myſelf to be the Lord's, and thus didſt thou graciouſly condeſcend to ſeal the privileges of the new covenant to my ſoul. And O let the ſolemn tranſaction never be forgotten; let it be writ in the volumes of eternity; let it be engraven in the books of unalterable deſtiny; there let the ſacred articles ſtand recorded, and be had in everlaſting remembrance.

XI. *Thou art my GOD.*

O God, thou art my God; thou art thy own bleſſedneſs, the center of thy own deſires and the boundleſs ſpring of thy own happineſs. Thou art immutable, and infinitely perfect, and therein conſiſts thy bleſſedneſs and glory: but that *thou art my God*, 'tis from thence flows all my conſolation; this glorious privilege is my dignity and boaſt; *Thou art my God, and I will praiſe thee, my father's God, and I will exalt thee: the Lord liveth, and bleſſed be my Rock, and let the God of my ſalvation be exalted. Thy benignity is better than life, therefore my lips ſhall praiſe thee.*

I have all things in poſſeſſing thee; I find

no want, no emptineſs within; my wiſhes are anſwered, and all my deſires appeaſed, when I believe my title to thy favour ſecure. Whatever tempeſts ariſe, whatever darkneſs ſurrounds me yet *thou art my God*, I cry, and the ſtorms are appeaſed, and the darkneſs vaniſhes. I find my expectations from the world diſappointed my friends falſe, and human dependance vain; but ſtill *thou art my God*, my unfailing Confidence, my Rock, my everlaſting inheritance. Death and hell level their darts againſt me; but with a heavenly tranquility I cry, *Thou art my God; I dwel on high, my place of defence is the munition of rocks.*

My Hiding-place, my Refuge, Tower,
And Shield, art thou, O Lord;
I firmly anchor all my hopes
On thy unerring word.

While thou art mine, what can I fear? Can omnipotence be vanquiſhed? Can almighty ſtrength be oppoſed? When it can, then, and not till then, ſhall I want ſecurity; then, and not till then, ſhall my confidence be ſhaken, and my hopes confounded.

Thou art my God; let me again repeat the glorious accents, and hear the pleaſurable ſounds. Let me a thouſand and a thouſand times repeat it; 'tis rapture all, and harmony: the harps of angels and their tongues,

gues, what notes more melodious could they ſing or play? What but theſe tranſporting words give the emphaſis to all their joys? On this they dwell; 'tis their eternal theme, *Thou art my God.* Like me every ſeraph boaſts the glorious propriety, and owes his happineſs to thoſe important words: in them unbounded joys are comprehended; paradiſe itſelf, all heaven is here deſcribed; all that is poſſible to be uttered of celeſtial bleſſedneſs is here contained.

My God, my all-ſufficient good,
My portion, and my choice;
In thee my veſt deſires are fill'd,
And all my powers rejoice.

My God, my triumph and my glory, let others boaſt of what they will, and pride themſelves in human ſecurities; let them place their confidence in their wealth, their honour, and their numerous friends; I renounce all earthly dependance, and glory only in my God.

From him alone my joys ſhall riſe,
And run eternal rounds,
Beyond the limits of the ſkies,
And all created bounds.

When death ſhall remove all other ſupports, and force me to quit my title to the deareſt names below, in *my God* I ſhall have

an

an unchangeable property: that engagement shall remain firm when I shall lose my hold of all other enjoyments; when all human things vanish with an everlasting flight, I shall bid them a joyful adieu, and breath out my soul with this triumphant exclamation, *Thou art my God*, my inheritance, my eternal possession: nor death, nor hell shall ever separate me from thy love.

Thou art my God. Let me survey the extent of my blessedness: let me take a prospect of my vast possession: let me consider its dimensions; O height! O depth! O length and breadth immeasurable! I have all that is worth possessing; *Thou art my God.*

But what have I uttered? Is mortality permitted to speak these daring words? Can the race of man make such glorious pretensions? Thou thyself canst give no more: thou that art thy own happiness, and the spring of joy to all thy creatures; with thee are the fountains of pleasure, and in thy presence is fulness, of joy: immortal life and happiness flow from thee, and they are necessarily blest who are surrounded with thy favour; thou art their God, and *thou art my God* to everlasting ages.

Earth flies with all the charms it has in store,
Its snares and gay temptations are no more.
Creatures no more of entity can boast, [*lost*:
The streams, the hills, and tow'ring groves are

The sun, the stars, and the fair fields of light
Withdraw, and now are vanish'd from my sight:
And God is all in all,

XII *Confession of sin, with hope of pardon.*

BREAK, break, insensible heart! let confusion cover me, and darkness, black as my own guilt, surround me. Lord, what a monster am I become? How hateful to myself for offending thee? How much more detesteble to thee, to thee against whom I have offended? Why have I provoked the God on whom my being every moment depends? The God, who out of nothing advanced me to a reasonable and immortal nature, and put me in a capacity of being happy for ever? The God whole goodness has run parallel with my life; who has preserved me in a thousand dangers, and kept me even from the ruin I courted, and even while I repined at the providence that saved me.

How often has he recovered me from eternal misery, and brought me back from the very borders of hell, when there was but a dying groan, but one faint sigh between me and everlasting perdition? When all human help failed, and, my mournful friends were taking their last farewell; when every smiling hope forsook me, and the horrors of death surrounded me, to God I cryed

yed from the depths of misery and des-
ir; I cryed, and he was intreated rescued
y life from destruction: he *brought me out*
the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock.
thousand instances of thy goodness could
recount, and all to my own confusion.

Could I consider thee as my enemy, I
ight forgive myself; but when I consider
ee as my best Friend, my tender Father,
e Sustainer of my life, and the Author of
y happiness, good God! what a monstrous
ing do I appear, who have sinned against
ee? Could I charge thee with severity,
call thy laws rigorous and unjust, I had
me excuse; but I am silenced there by
e conviction of my own reason, which a-
nts to all thy precepts as just and holy.
ut to heighten my guilt, I have violated
e sacred rules I approve: I have provok-
d the justice I fear, and offended the puri-
y I adore.

Yet still there are higher aggravations of
ny iniquity; and what gives me the utmost
onfusion is, that I have sinned against un-
ounded love and goodness: horrid ingrati-
ude! here lies the emphasis of my folly and
nisery; the sense of this torments me,
an I not say, as much as the dread of hell,
r the fears of losing heaven? Thy love
nd tender compassion, the late pleasing sub-
ects of my thoughts, are on this account
become my terror. The titles of an ene-

my

my and a judge ſcarce found more pain
to my ears, than thoſe of a Friend and
Benefactor, which ſo ſhamefully enhan
my guilt: thoſe ſacred names confou
and terrify my ſoul, becauſe they furni
my conſcience with the moſt exquiſite r
proaches: the thoughts of ſuch goodne
abuſed, and ſuch clemency affronted, ſee
to me almoſt as inſupportable, as thoſe o
thy wrath and ſeverity.

O whither ſhall I turn? I dare not loo
upward; the ſun and ſtars upbraid me there
if I look downward, the fields and fountain
take their Creator's part, and heaven an
earth conſpire to aggravate my ſins: thoſ
common bleſſings tell me how much I a
indebted to thy bounty: but, Lord, whe
I recal thy particular favours, I am utter
confounded; what numerous inſtance
could I recount? Nor has my rebellion ye
ſhut up the fountain of thy grace; for ye
I breathe, and yet I live, and live to implo
a pardon: heaven is ſtill open, and th
throne of God acceſſible. But oh! wit
what confidence can I approach it? Wha
motives can I urge, but ſuch as carry m
own condemnation in them?

Shall I urge thy former pity and indul
gence? This were to plead againſt myſelf
and yet thy clemency, that clemency which
I have abuſed, is the beſt argument I can
bring; thy grace and clemency as reveale
in

n Jesus, the Son of love, the bleſſed Reonciler of God and man.

O whither has my folly reduced me? ith what words ſhall I chuſe to addreſs ee? *Pardon my iniquity, O Lord, for it is reat*: ſurpriſing argument! yet this will agnify thy goodneſs, and yield me an eernal theme to praiſe thee: 'twill add an mphaſis to all my grateful ſongs, and tune y harp to everlaſting harmony. The anſomed of the Lord ſhall join with me, hile this glorious inſtance of thy grace exites their wonder, and my unbounded gratude: thus ſhall thy glory be exalted.

O Lord God, permit a poor worthleſs reatu e to plead a little with thee: what onour will my deſtruction bring thee? What rofit, what triumph to the Almighty will y perdition be? Mercy is thy brighteſt ttribute; this gives thee all thy loveline's, nd completes thy beauty. By names of indneſs and indulgence thou haſt choſen to eveal thyſelf to men: by titles of the moſt ender import thou haſt made thy elf known o my ſoul; titles which thou doſt not yet iſdain, but are ſtill compaſſionate and ready o pardon.

But that thou haſt or wilt forgive me, O y God, aggravates my guilt. And wilt hou indeed forgive me? Wilt thou remit he gloomy ſcore, and reſtore the privilege have forfeited? Wondrous love! aſtoniſh-

benignity!

benignity! let me never live to repent
ingratitude; let me never live to break
penitent vows; let me die e're that unh
py moment arrive.

XIII. *The absence of GOD on earth*

WHAT is hell? What is damnati
but an exclusion from thy presenc
'Tis the want of that which gives the re
ons of darkness all their horrid: what
heaven? What are the satisfactions of
gels, but the views of thy glory? What
thy smiles and complacence are the spri
of their immortal transports?

Without the light of thy countenan
what privilege is my being? What c
thou thyself give me to countervail the
finite loss? Could the riches, the em
glories and insipid pleasures of the wo
recompence me for it? Ah! no. Not
the variety of the creation could satisfy
while I am deprived of thee: let the a
bitious, the licentious and covetous, sh
these trifles among themselves; they are
amusements for my dejected thoughts.

There was a time (but ah! that hap
time is past, those blissful minutes gon
when with a modest assurance I could c
thee *my Father, my almighty Friend, my*
sence, my Hope, and my exceeding great
ward: but those glorious advantages are lo
th

ſe raviſhing proſpects withdrawn, and to
trembling ſoul thou doſt no more ap-
ar but as a conſuming fire, an inacceſſi-
Majeſty, my ſevere judge, and my om-
otent adverſary; and who ſhall deliver
out of thy hands? Where ſhall I find a
lter from thy wrath? What ſhades can
ver me from thy all-ſeeing eye?

One glance from thee, one piercing ray
Would kindle darkneſs into day:
The veil of night is no diſguiſe,
No ſcreen from thy all ſearching eyes:
Thro' midnight ſhades thou ſpa'ſt thy way
As in the blazing noon of day.

t will the Lord caſt off for ever? Will he
favourable no more? Has God indeed for-
ten to be gracious? Will he ſhut out my
ayers for ever, and muſt I never behold
y Maker? Muſt I never meet thoſe ſmiles
t fill the heavenly inhabitants with unut-
able joys? Thoſe ſmiles which enlighten
e celeſtial region, and make everlaſting
y above? In vain then have theſe wretch-
eyes beheld the light, in vain am I endu-
with reaſonable faculties and immortal
inciples: alas! what will they prove but
erlaſting curſes, if I muſt never ſee the face
God?

Is it a dream? or do I hear
The voice that ſo delights my ear?

Lo,

Lo, he o'er hills his steps extends,
And bounding from the clifts ascends:
Now like a roe outstrips the wind,
And leaves the panting hart behind.

I have waited for thee as they that wait for the morning, and thy returns are more welcome than the springing day-light after the horrors of a melancholy night; more welcome than ease to the sick, than water to the thirsty, or rest to the weary traveller. How undone was I without thee? In vain while thou wert absent, the world hath tried to entertain me: all it could offer were like jests to dying men, or like recreations to the damned. On thy favour alone my tranquility depends; deprived of that, I should sigh for happiness in the midst of paradise: *thy loving-kindness is better than life*; and if a taste of thy love be thus transporting, what extasies shall I know when I drink my fill of the streams of blis that flow from thy right hand for ever? But when—

When shall this happy day of vision be?
When shall I make a near approach to thee?
Be lost in love and wrapt in extasy?
Oh! when shall I behold thee all serene,
Without this envious cloudy veil between?
'Tis true the sacred elements † impart
Thy virtual presence to my faithful heart,
But to my sense still unreveal'd thou art.
Thi

† *At the Lord's supper.*

This, tho' a great, is an imperfect bliss,
To see a shadow for the God I wish:
My soul a more exalted pitch would fly,
And view thee in the heights of majesty.

XIV. *Banishment from GOD for ever*

Depart from me, ye cursed: oh let me never hear thy voice pronounce those dreadful words. With what terrors would that sentence pierce my heart, while it thunders in my ears? Oh! rather speak me into my primitive nothing, and with one potent word finish my existence. To be separated from thee, and curst with immortality, who can sustain the intolerable doom?

O dreadful state of black despair,
To see my God remove,
And fix my doleful station where
I must not taste his love,

nor view the light of thy countenance for ever. Unutterable woe! there is no hell beyond it. Separation from God is the depth of misery? blackness of darkness and eternal night must necessarily involve a soul excluded from thy presence. What life, what joy, what hope is to be found where thou art not? I want words to paint my thoughts of that dismal state. Oh! let me

never be reserved for the dreadful experience; rather let loose thy wrath, and in a moment reduce me into nothing.

Depart from thee! Oh! whither should I go from thee? *Into utter darkness?* That makes no addition at all to the wretched misery that's banished from thy face. After that fearful doom, I should without constraint seek out shades as dark as hell, being most agreeable to my own despair, and in the horrors of eternal night bewail the infinite loss.

The remembrance of that lost happiness would render celestial day insufferable. The light of paradise could not chear me without thy favour. the songs of angels would but heighten my anguish, and torment me with a scene of bliss which I must never taste. The sight of thy favourit and the glories of thy court would but cite my envy, and fill me with madness, while I consider myself the object of thine eternal indignation: nor could all the harmony of heaven allay the horror of that reflection.

The groans of the damned, and the darkness of the infernal caverns, would better suit my grief. There to the cries of tormented ghosts, and to the sound of eternal tempests, I might join my wild complaints, and lament the loss of infinite bliss, and curse my own folly: but all the plagues below, if I might speak my present thoughts,

should

ould not extort a blaſphemous reflection
n the divine attributes; for I know I de-
rve eternal miſery, and even in hell I think
ſhould confeſs thy juſtice. Thy long ex-
erienced clemency, I am ſure, ought to
ence my reproaches for ever, and to all e-
rnity leave thee unblemiſhed with the im-
tation of cruelty.

But Oh! what agonies would the re-
embrance of thy former favour excite?
hat exquiſite remorſe would it give me
recal thoſe happy moments when thou
dſt bleſs my retired devotions with thy
eſence? After I have reliſhed thoſe di-
ne entertainments, how bitter would the
egs of thy wrath be? Whither would thy
owns ſink me, after I have enjoyed the
ht of thy countenance?

If I muſt loſe thy *favour*, Oh! let me for-
t what that word imports, and blot for
er from my remembrance the joy that a
nſe of thy love has excited: let no traces
f thoſe ſacred tranſports be left on my
ul.

But muſt I depart from thee into ever-
ſting fire? Double and dreadful curſe!
d yet unquenchable flames and infernal
ains (if I can judge in this life of ſuch aw-
l futurities) would be leſs terrible than
e ſenſe of thoſe loſt joys. That loſs
ould endure no reflection; the review
ould be for ever inſufferable; the ages of

eternity could not diminiſh the exquiſite regret; ſtill it would excite new and unutterable anguiſh, and rack me with infinite diſpair.

Bleſſed *God*, pity the ſoul whoſe extreameſt horror is the doom of an eternal departure from thee. Draw my ſpirit into the holieſt and the neareſt union with thyſelf that is poſſible, while it dwells in this fleſh; and let me here commence that delightful reſidence and converſe with God, which nor death, nor judgment ſhall ever deſtroy, nor ſhall a long eternity ever put a period to it.

XV. *The glory of GOD in his works of creation, providence and redemption.*

MY being immediately flows from thee, and ſhould I not praiſe my omnipotent Maker? I received the laſt breath I draw from thee, thou doſt ſuſtain my life this very moment, and the next depends entirely on thy pleaſure. 'Tis the dignity of my nature to know, and my happineſs to praiſe and adore my great original. But Oh! thou ſupreme of all things, how art thou to be extolled by mortal man? I *ſay to corruption, Thou art my father, and to the worms, Ye are my brethren; my days are as a hand's breadth, and my life is nothing before thee; but thou art the ſame, and thy years never fail: from everlaſting to everlaſting thou*

thou art God, the incomprehenſible, the immutable divinity. The language of paradiſe, and the ſtrains of celeſtial eloquence, fall ſhort of thy perfections; the firſt-born ſons of light loſe themſelves in bliſsful aſtoniſhment in ſearch of thy excellencies; even they with ſilent extacy adore thee, while thou art veiled with ineffable ſplendor.

The bright, the bleſs'd divinity is known
And comprehended by himſelf alone.

Who can conceive the extent of that power which out of nothing brought materials for a riſing world, and from a gloomy chaos bid the harmonious univerſe appear?

Confuſion heard the voice, and wild uproar
Stood rul'd; ſtood vaſt infinity confin'd.

At thy word the pillars of the ſky were framed, and its beauteous arches rais'd: thy breath kindled the ſtars, adorned the moon with ſilver rays, and gave the ſun its flaming ſplendor. Thou didſt prepare for the waters their capacious bed, and by thy power ſet bounds to the raging billows: by thee the vallies were clothed in their flowry pride, and the mountains crowned with groves. In all the wonderful effects of nature, we adore and confeſs thy power; thou uttereſt thy voice in thunder, and doſt ſcat-

ter thy lightning abroad; thou rideſt on the wings of the wind, the mountains ſmoke, and the foreſts tremble at thy approach; the ſummer and the winter, the ſhady night, and the bright revolutions of the day, are thine.

Theſe are thy glorious works, parent of good;
Almighty, thine this univerſal frame:
Thus wond'rous they, thyſelf how won'rous then?

But O! what muſt thy eſſential Majeſty and beauty be, if thou art thus illuſtrious in thy works? If the diſcoveries of thy power and wiſdom are thus delightful, how tranſporting are the manifeſtations of thy goodneſs? From thee every thing that lives receives its breath; and by thee are all upheld in life. Thy providence reaches the leaſt in ſect, for thou art good, and thy care extends to all thy other words. Thou feedeſt the ravens, and doſt provide the young lions their prey; thou ſcatterest thy bleſſings with a liberal hand on the whole creation: man ungrateful man, largely partakes thy bounty. Thou cauſeſt thy rain to deſcend, and makeſt thy ſun to ſhine on the evil and unthankful; *for thou art good, and thy mercy endureth for ever.*

As the Creator and preſerver of men thou art gloriouſly manifeſt; but oh! how much

ch more gloriously art thou revealed, as conciling ungrateful enemies to thyself by blood of thy eternal Son? Here thy neficence displays its brightest splendor: re thou dost fully discover thy most magicent titles, THE LORD THE LORD GOD, RCIFUL AND GRACIOUS LONG-SUFRING, AND ABUNDANT IN GOODNESS: *w unsearchable are thy ways, and thy paths ll finding out?* Infinite depths of love, ner to be expreſt by human language! and t should man be silent, the stones themlves would speak, and the mute creation nd a voice to upbraid his ungrateful folly.

XVI. *Longing for the coming of CHRIST.*

COME, *Lord Jesus*, come quickly: Oh come, lest my expectations faint, lest I row weary, and murmur at thy long delay. am tired with these vanities, and the world rowes every day more un-entertaining and nsipid; it has now lost its charms, and finds my heart insensible to all its allurements. With coldness and contempt I view these transitory glories, inspired with nobler prospects and vaster expectations by faith. I see the promised land, and every day brings me nearer the possession of my heavenly inheritance. Then shall I see God and live, and face to face behold my triumphant Redeemer.

And

And in his favour find immortal light.
Ye hours and days cut ſhopt your tedious flight
Ye months and years (if ſuch allotted be
In this deteſted barren world for me)
With haſty revolution roll along,
I languiſh with impatience to be gone.

I have nothing here to linger for; my hopes, my reſt, my treaſure, and my joy are all above: my ſoul faints for the courts of the Lord in a dry and thirſty land, where there is no refreſhment.

How long *ſhall I dwell in Meſhech, and ſojourn in the tents of Kedar?* When will the wearisome journey of life be finiſhed? When ſhall I reach my everlaſting home, and arrive at my celeſtial country? My heart, my wiſhes are already there: I have no engagement to delay my farewel, nothing to detain me here; but wander an unacquainted pilgrim, a ſtranger and deſolate, far from my native regions.

My friends are gone before, and are now triumphing in the ſkies, ſecure of the conqueſt, poſſeſt of the rewards of victory. They ſurvey the field of battle, and look back with pleaſure on the diſtant danger: death and hell for ever vanquiſhed, leave them in the poſſeſſion of endleſs tranquillity and joy; while I, beſet with a thouſand ſnares, and tired with continual toil, unſteadily maintain the field, till active faith

ſteps

eps in, assures me of the conquest, and hews me the immortal crown. 'Tis faith ells me that *light is sown for the righteous, nd gladness for the upright in heart*: it as- ures me that *my Redeemer lives, and that e shall stand at the last day on the earth; nd though after my skin worms destroy this ody, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I hall see for myself, and not another's and these yes shall behold, though my reins be consumed ithin me.* Amen, ever so come Lord *Jesus.* This must be the language of my oul till thou dost appear, and these my im- patient breathings after thee: Till I see thy alvation, my heart and my flesh will pine or the living God.

Grant me, O Lord, to fulfill as a hireling my day; shorten the space, and let it be full of action. 'Tis of small importance how few there are of these little circles of days and hours, so they are but well filled up with devotion, and with all proper duty.

XVII. *Seeking after an absent* O O D.

OH! let not the Lord be angry, and I who am but dust will speak: why dost thou withdraw thyself, and suffer me to pursue thee in vain? if I am surrounded with thy immensity, why am I thus insen- sible of thee? Why do I not find thee if thou art every where present? I search thee

in

in the temple, where thou hast often met me; there I have seen the traces of thy majesty and beauty; but those sacred visions bless my sight no more. I search thee in my secret retirements, where I have called upon thy name, and have often heard the whispers of thy voice; that celestial conversation hath often reached and raptured my soul, but I am solaced no more with those divine condescensions: I listen, but I hear those gentle sounds no more; I pine and languish, but thou fliest me; still I wither in thy absence, as a drooping plant for the reviving sun.

O when wilt thou scatter this melancholy darkness? When shall the shadows flee before thee? When shall the chearful glory of thy grace drawn upon my mind at thy approach? I shall revive at thy light: my vital spirits will confess thy presence? grief and anxiety will vanish before thee, and immortal joys surround my soul.

Where thou art present, heaven and happiness ensue; hell and damnation fills the breast where thou art absent. While God withdraws I am encompassed with darkness and despair; the sun and stars shine with an uncomfortable lustre; the faces of my friends grow tiresome; the smiles of angels would fail to chear my languishing spirit: I grow unacquainted with tranquillity; peace and joy are empty sounds to me, and words without a meaning. Tell

Tell me not of glory and pleaſure, there re no ſuch things without my God; while e withdraws, what delights can theſe trifles fford? All that amuſes mankind are but reams of happineſs, ſhades and fantaſtic ppearances: what compenſation can they ake for an infinite good departed? All naure cannot repair my loſs: heaven and arth would offer their treaſures in vain; not ll the kingdoms of this world, nor the rones of archangels, could give me a reompenſe for an abſent God.

O where can my grief find redreſs? Whence can I draw ſatisfaction when the ountain of joy ſeals up its ſtreams? My orrows are hopeleſs till he return; without im my night will never ſee a dawn, but xtend to everlaſting darkneſs: content and y will be eternal ſtrangers to my breaſt. ad I all things within the compaſs of creaon to delight me, his frowns would blaſt e whole enjoyment: unreconciled to God, y ſoul would be for ever at variance with elf.

Even now, while I believe thy glory hid om me but with a tranſient eclipſe, while wait for thy return as for the dawning ay, my ſoul ſuffers inexpreſſible agonies at e delay the minutes ſeem to linger, and ays are lengthened into ages: but, Lord, hat keener anguiſh ſhould I feel, did I ink thy preſence had totally forſaken me; did

did I imagine thy glory ſhould no more a riſe on my ſoul? My ſpirits fail at the ſup poſition; I cannot face the dreadful ap prehenſions of my God for ever gone. I it not hell in its moſt horrid proſpect? Eter nal darkneſs, and the undying worm; infi nite ruin, and irreparable damage? Com pared to this, what were all the plagues tha earth could threaten, or hell invent? What' diſgrace, and poverty, and pain? What's al that mortals fear, real or imaginary evils They are nothing compared to the terror which the thought of loſing my God exites

O thou, who art my boundleſs treaſure, my infinite delight, my all, my ineffable portion, can I part with thee? I may ſe without light, and breathe without air, ſoon er than be bleſſed without my God. Hap pineſs ſeparate from thee were a contradic tion, an impoſſibility (if I dare ſpeak it) t omnipotence itſelf. I feel a flame whic the moſt glorious creation could not ſatisfy an emptineſs which nothing but infinite lov could fill. I muſt find thee, or weary my ſelf in an eternal purſuit. Nothing ſha divert me in the endleſs ſearch, no obſtacl ſhall fright me back, no allurement withol me, nothing ſhall flatter or relieve my im patience; my bliſs, my heaven, my all de pends on the ſucceſs. Shew me where thou art, O my God, conduct me into thy preſence and let thy love confine me there for ever.

VIII. *Appeals to GOD concerning the supremacy of love to him.*

O GOD, when I ceaſe to love and praiſe thee, let me ceaſe to breathe and live; when I forget thee, let me forget the name of happineſs, and let every pleaſing idea be razed from my memory. When thou art not my ſupreme delight, let all things elſe deceive me; let me grow unacquainted with peace, and ſeek repoſe in vain: let deluſions mock my fayeſt hopes, let my deſires find no ſatisfaction, till they are terminated all in thee. When I forget the ſatisfaction of thy love, O my God, let pleaſure be a ſtranger to my ſoul; when I prefer not that to my chiefeſt joy, let me be inſenſible of all delight; when thy benignity is not dearer to me than life, let that life become my burden and my pain.

Search the inmoſt receſſes of my heart, and if thou findeſt any competitor there, remove the darling vanity, and blot every name but thine from thy breaſt. Let me find nothing but emptineſs in the creature, when I forſake the all-ſufficient Creator: let the ſtreams be cut off when I wander away and abandon the fountain. Let me be deſtitute of aſſiſtance when I ceaſe to rely on thee; let my lips be for ever ſilent when they refuſe to acknowledge thy benefits,

and make not thee the subject of their highest praise. Let no joyful strain enter at my ears, when thy name is not the most delightful sound they can convey to my heart.

I have been pronouncing heavy curses on myself, if thy love be not my chief blessing; yet, O my dearest good, my portion, and my only felicity, might I not go on farther still, and even venture immortal joys on the sincerity of my love to thee? Blessed Lord, forgive these dangerous efforts of a mortal tongue, which are the mere outbreakings of a fervent affection. I could even dare to pledge all my hopes and my pretensions to future happiness, (and O let not my heart deceive me) I think I could risque them all, if thou thyself art not the object of my brightest hopes, and the light of thy countenance the height of that expected happiness.

If I desire any thing in heaven or on earth in comparison of thee, I am almost ready to say, Banish me as an eternal exile from the light of paradise: even that paradise would be melancholy darkness without thee, and the obscurest corner of the creation, blessed with thy presence, would be more agreeable. Oh! where could I be happy remote from thee? What imaginable good could supply thy absence? Say, O my God, do I not love thee?

Shall I call the holy angels to witness?

Shall

Shall I call heaven and earth to witneſs? Will not the moſt high God himſelf, the poſſeſſor of heaven and earth condeſcend to witneſs the ardour and ſincerity of my love?

With what pleaſure do I reflect on the obligations by which I have devoted myſelf to thee? My ſoul collects itſelf, and with an entire aſſent gives up all its powers to thee: I would bind myſelf to thee beyond all the ties that mortals know. You miniſters of light, give me your flames, and teach me your celeſtial forms; let all be noble and pathetic, and ſolemn as your own immortal vows, and I will joyfully go through them all to bind myſelf to my God for ever. Say, now, ye heavens and earth, ſay, ye holy angels, and O thou all-knowing God, ſay, do I not love thee?

XIX. *A devout rapture, or love to GOD inexpreſſible,*

THOU radiant ſun, thou moon, and all ye ſparkling ſtars, how gladly would I leave your pleaſant light to ſee the face of God? Ye chryſtal ſtreams, ye groves and flowry lawns, my innocent delights, how joyfully could I leave you to meet that bliſsful proſpect? and you delightful faces of my friends, I would this moment quit you all to ſee him whom my ſoul loves; ſo loves, that I can find no words to expreſs the un-

utterable ardour: not as the miser loves his wealth, nor the ambitious his grandeur; not as the libertine loves his pleasures, or the generous man his friend: these are flat similitudes to describe such an intense passion as mine. Not as a man scorched in a fever, longs for a cooling draught; not as a weary traveller wishes for soft repose; my restless desires admit of no equal comparison from these.

I love my friend; my vital breath and the light of heaven are dear to me: but should I say, I love my God as I love these, I should belie the sacred flame which aspires to infinity. 'Tis thee abstractly thee, O uncreated beauty, that I love; in thee, my wishes are all terminated; in thee as in their blissful center, all my desires meet, and there they must be eternally fixed: 'tis thou alone that must constitute my everlasting happiness. Were the harps of angels silent there would be harmony for me in the whispers of thy love: were the fields of light darkened, thy smiles would bless me with everlasting day: the vision of thy face will attract my eyes, nor give me leisure to waste a look on other objects to all eternity any farther than God is to be seen in his creatures. All their beams of grace, and joy, and glory, are derived from thee, the eternal Son, and will merit my attention no farther than they reflect thy image, or discover thy excellencies.

Even

Even at this diſtance, encompaſſed with the ſhades of death, and the miſts of darkneſs, in theſe cold melancholy regions when a ray of thy love breaks in on my ſoul, when through the clouds I can trace but one feeble beam, even that obſcures all human glory, and gives me a contempt for whatever mortality can boaſt. What wonder then will the open viſion of thy face effect, when I ſhall enjoy it in ſo ſublime a degree, that the magnificence of the ſkies will not draw my regard, nor the converſe of angels divert my thoughts from thee? Thou will engroſs my everlaſting attention, and I ſhould abound in felicity if I had nothing to entertain me but immediate communion with the infinite divinity.

Mend thy pace, old lazy time, and ſhake thy heavy lands; make ſhorter circles, ye rolling planets; when will your deſtined courſes be fulfilled? Thou reſtleſs ſun, how long wilt thou travel the celeſtial road? when will thy ſtarry walk be finiſhed? When will the commiſſioned angel arreſt thee in thy progreſs, and lifting up his hand, ſwears by the unutterable name, *That time ſhall be no more.* O happy period! my impatient ſoul ſprings forward to ſalute thee, and leaves the lagging days, and months, and years far behind. *Make haſte, my Beloved, and be like a roe, or a young hart on the ſpicy mountains.*

I pine, I die for a ſight of thy counten-

ance; oh! turn the veil aſide, blow away the ſeparating cloud; pull out the pins of this tabernacle, break the cords, and let fall the curtain of mortality. Oh! let it interpoſe no longer between me and my perfect bliſs. I feel thoſe flames of divine love, which are unextinguiſhable as the lights of heaven, not death itſelf ſhall quench the ſacred ardour.

Ye miniſters of light, ye guardians of the juſt, ſtand and witneſs to my vows; and in a humble dependance on thy grace, O *Jeſus*, may I not venture to bid theſe thy flaming miniſters protect againſt me when I change my love, and ſtand my accuſers at the laſt judgment? When I prove falſe to thee, may I not venture to ſay to them all. Bring in your awful evidence, and proclaim my perjury.

For you have liſten'd, while the ſacred name
That kindles in each heavenly breaſt a flame,
You liſten'd, while it melted on my tongue,
Flow'd from my lips, and grac'd the midnight (ſong.
Bleſs'd was the time, and ſwiftly fled the hours
While holy love employ'd my nobleſt powers:
The heavens appear'd, and the propitious ſkies
Unveil'd their inmoſt glories to my eyes.
Oh! ſtay, I cry'd, ye happy moments ſtay,
Nor in your flight ſnatch theſe delights away:
I aſk

I ask no more the rising sun to view,
To mortals and their hopes I bid adieu.

These heavens and this earth have been witnesses to my vows: the holy angels have been witnesses, and all will join together to condemn me when I violate my faith. Strengthen and confirm it, O my Saviour, and make the bonds of it immortal.

If I were only to reason upon this subject, I might say, what motive could earth, what could hell, what could heaven itself propose to tempt my soul to change its love? What could they lay in the balance against an infinite good? What could be thrown in as a stake against the favour of God? Ask the happy souls who know what the light of his countenance imports, who drink in joy and immortality from his smiles, ask them what value they set on their enjoymens; ask them what in heaven or earth should purchase one moment's interval of their bliss; ask some radiant seraph, amidst the fervency of his raptures, at what price he values his happiness: and when these have named the purchase, earth and hell may try to ballance mine. Let them spread the baits that tempt deluded men to ruin; let riches, honour, beauty, and bewitching pleasure appear in all their charms, the sensuality of the present and past ages, the Persian delicacy, and the Roman pride; let them uncover

uncover the golden mines, and diſcloſe the ruby ſparkling in its bed; let them open the veins of ſapphire, and ſhew the diamond glittering on its rock; let them all be thrown into the ballance; alas! their weight is too little and too light.——Let the pageantries of ſtate be added, imperial titles, and the enſigns of majeſty; put in all that boundleſs vanity imagines, or wild ambition craves, crowns and ſceptres, regal veſtments and golden thrones—the ſcale ſtill mount.——Throw in the world intire—'tis unſubſtantial, and light as airy vanity.

Are theſe thy higheſt boaſts, O deluding world?——Ye miniſters of darkneſs, have you nothing elſe to offer? Are theſe your utmoſt propoſals? Are theſe a compenſation for the FAVOUR OF GOD? Alas! that boundleſs word has a meaning which outweighs them all: infinite delight, unconceivable joy are expreſſed in it; the light of his countenance ſignifies more than angels can deſcribe, or mortality imagine: and ſhall I quit all that an everlaſting heaven means, for empty ſhadows?

Go, ye baffled tempters, go offer your toys to madmen and fools; they all vaniſh under my ſcorn, and cannot yield ſo much as an amuſement to my aſpiring thoughts. The ſun in all his ſpacious circuit beholds nothing to tempt my wiſhes. Theſe winding ſkies in all their ample round contain nothing

nothing equal to my deſires; my ambition has far different ends and other proſpects in view; nothing below the joys of angels can ſatisfy me.

Let me explore the worlds of life and beauty, and find a path to the dazzling receſſes of the Moſt High: let me drink at the fountain head of pleaſure, and derive all that I want from orginal and uncreated fulneſs and felicity.

Oh divine love! let me lanch out into thy pleaſurable depths, and be ſwallowed up of thee: let me plunge at once in immortality, and loſe myſelf in the infinite ocean of happineſs.

Till then I pine for my celeſtial country; till then I murmur to the winds and ſtreams, and tell the ſolitary ſhades my grief. The groves are conſcious to my complaints and the moon and ſtars liſten to my ſighs; by their ſilent lights I talk over my heavenly concerns, and give a vent to my divine affections in mortal language; then looking upward, I grow impatient to reach the milky way, the ſeats of joy and immortality.

Come love, come life, and that bleſs'd day
For which I languiſh, come away:
When this dry ſoul, theſe eyes ſhall ſee,
And drink the inſeal d ſource of thee.

Oh come, I cry, thou whom my ſoul loveth; I would go on, but want expreſſi-

on,

on, and vainly ſtruggle with the unutterable thought.

Tell me, you ſons of light, who feel the force of thoſe celeſtial fires, in what language you paint their ſacred violence? Or do the tongues of ſeraphs faulter? Does the language of paradiſe want emphaſis here, and immortal eloquence fail? Surely your happineſs is more perfect than all your deſcriptions of it: heaven echoes to your charming notes as far as they reach, while divine love, which is all your ſong, is infinite, and knows no limits of degree or duration.

Yet I would ſay, ſome gentle ſpirit, come and inſtruct me in your art; lend me your golden harp, and guide the ſacred flight; let me imitate your devout ſtrains, let me copy out your harmony, and then,

Some of the faireſt quire above
Shall flock around my ſong,
With joy to hear the name they love
Sound from a mortal tongue.

Bleſſed and immortal creatures, I long to join with you in your celeſtial ſtyle of adoration and love, I long to learn your extaſies of worſhip and joy in a language which mortals cannot pronounce, and to ſpeak the divine paſſion of my ſoul in words which are now unſpeakable.

XX

XX. *Self-reproof for inactivity.*

IS it poſſible that I ſhould one day be rapt almoſt into the third heavens, and e'er a few weeks have paſſed over me, I ſhould find myſelf creeping among the inſects of the earth, and almoſt as meanly buſied as they? Can divine love, which exalted me lately into flaming tranſports, ſo far ſubſide and grow cool within me? Can it leave me ſo unactive as I now feel myſelf? What ſhall I do to ſhame my conſcience with reproaches, and renew the flame of religious zeal and vigour.

Alas! how does the activity of men about the little affairs of human life condemn my negligence in matters of everlaſting conſequence? Does the fond lover with ſuch anxiety and impatience purſue the object of his wiſhes, and ſhall not divine beauty and infinite lovelineſs enflame my deſires to a nobler height, and excite my langoiſhing devotion?

Are the ambitious ſo reſtleſs and ſollicitous to make themſelves great, and to purchaſe the veneration of fools? Do they lay ſuch mighty projects and compaſs their deſigns with ſuch pains and difficulty, for mere pageantry and gaudy trifles; and ſhall I, who am a candidate for heaven, a probationer for celeſtial dignity, loſe my title for want

want of diligence? Shall I faint in the noble ſtrife, when God and angels are ready to aſſiſt me, and every moment's toil will be recompenſed with eternal ages of reſt and triumph?

See, ſee, the moments fly, the labour ſhortens, and the immenſe reward draws near; the palm of victory, the ſtarry crown are in view; the happy realms and fields of light entertain me with their glorious proſpect. Rouze thee, my ſoul, to the moſt active purſuit of theſe felicities: waken all thy ſprightly powers, and let it never, never be thy reproach, that the vigour and intenſeneſs of thy labours fall ſhort of the pretenſions of thy deſire; or that thy holy induſtry ſhould ſink ſo far below the fervour of thoſe affections, which in a devout hour thou haſt pronounced *inexpreſſible*.

O Lord, what a mutable thing is man? What frailty works in this fleſh and blood, and hangs heavy upon our better powers? 'Tis grace, divine grace alone can keep alive that immortal ſpark within us, which came firſt from heaven, and firſt taught our hearts to raiſe and ſpring upward. Preſerve and complete thy own work, Almighty grace.

XXI. *A joful view of approaching death.*

O Death, where is thy ſting? Where is thy boaſted victory? The conqueſt is mine;

mine; I ſhall paſs in triumph through thy dark dominions, and through the grace of the Son of God, my divine leader, I ſhall appear there not a captive but a conqueror.

O king of terrors, where are thy formidable looks? I can ſee nothing dreadful in thy aſpect? Thou appeareſt with no tokens of defiance, nor doſt thou come with ſummons from a ſevere judge; but gatle invitations from my bleſſed Redeemer, who has paſt gloriouſly through thy territories, in his way to his throne.

Thrice welcome, thou kind meſſenger of my liberty and happineſs! a thouſand times more welcome than jubilee to the wretched ſlave, than pardon to a condemned malefactor: I am going from darkneſs and confinement to immenſe light and perfect liberty; from theſe tempeſtuous regions to the ſoft and peaceful climes above; from pain and grief to everlaſting eaſe and tranquillity. For the toils of virtue, I ſhall immediately receive its vaſt rewards; for the reproach of fools, the honour and applauſe of angels. In a few minutes I ſhall be higher than yonder ſtars, and brighter far than they. I ſhall range the boundleſs ether, and breathe the balmy airs of paradiſe. I ſhall preſently behold my glorious Maker, and ſing hallelujahs to my exalted Saviour.

And now come, ye bright guardians of

the juſt, conduct me thro' the unknown and trackleſs ether, for you paſs and repaſs this celeſtial road continually; you have commiſſion not to leave me till I arrive at *Mount Sion* the heavenly Jeruſalem, the city of the living God; till I come to the innumerable company of angels, and the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.

Hold out, faith and patience; 'tis but a little while and your work will be at an end; but a few moments and theſe ſighs and groans ſhall be converted into everlaſting hallelujahs; but a few weary ſteps and the journey of life will be finiſhed. One effort more, and I ſhall have gained the top of the everlaſting hills, and from yonder bright ſummit ſhall preſently look back on the dangers I have eſcaped in my travels through the wilderneſs.

Roll faſter on, ye lingering minutes; the nearer my joys, the more impatient I am to ſeize them: after theſe painful agonies how greedily ſhall I drink in immortal eaſe and pleaſure? Break away, ye thick clouds, begone ye envious ſhades, and let me behold the glories ye conceal: let me ſee the promiſed land, and ſurvey the happy regions I am immediately to poſſeſs. How long will you interpoſe between me and my bright ſun? between me and the unclouded face of God? Look up, my ſoul, ſee how ſweetly thoſe reviving beams break forth! how they

hey diſpel the gloom, and gild the ſhades
f death!

O bleſt eternity! with what a cheerful
lendor doſt thou dawn on my ſoul? with
hee comes liberty, and peace, and love, and
ndleſs felicity; but pain, and ſorrow, tu-
mult, and death, and darkneſs vaniſh before
hee for ever. I am juſt upon the ſhores of
hoſe happy realms where uninterrupted
ay and eternal ſpring reſide: yonder are the
electable hills and harmonious vales which
ontinually eccho to the ſongs of angels.
There the bliſsful fields, extend their ver-
dure, and there the immortal gróves aſcend;
ut how dazling is thy proſpect, O city of
God, of whom ſuch glorious thing are ſpoken?
n thee *there ſhall be no more night, nor need*
f the ſun or moon; for the throne of God,
nd of the Lamb is in the midſt of thee,
nd the nations that are ſaved ſhall walk in thy
ight, and the kings of the earth ſhall bring
heir glory and honour into thee, and there the
lorious Lord ſhall be to us a place of defence,
place of ſtreams and broad rivers, and the
oice of joy, and the ſhout of triumph ſhall
e heard in thee for ever.

There holy ſouls perpetual ſabbaths keep;
And never are concern'd for food or ſleep:
There new-come ſaints with wreaths of light
are crown'd,
While ivory harps and ſilver trumpets ſound:

There flaming ſeraphs ſacred hymns begin,
And raptur'd cherubs loud reſponſes ſing.

My eyes ſhall there behold the king in his beauty, and oh! how raviſhing will the aſpects of his love be? What unutterable extaſies ſhall I feel, when I meet thoſe ſmiles which enlighten heaven, and exhilerate all the celeſtial regions? When I ſhall view the beatific glory without one interpoſing cloud to eternity? When I ſhall drink my fill at the fountains of joy, and in thoſe rivers of pleaſure that flow from his right hand for ever.

XXII. *A devout reſignation of ſelf to the divine power and goodneſs.*

MY all-ſufficient friend, *my ſhield, and my exceeding great reward!* I have enough: unbounded avarice can covet nothing beyond thee; the ſoul whom thou doſt not ſuffice, deſerves to be eternally poor. Thou art my ſupreme happineſs, my voluntary choice: I took thy love alone for my treaſure in that bleſt day when I entered into covenant with thee, and became thine: I made no articles with thee for the friendſhip, the honours and pleaſures of the world; but ſolemnly renounced them all, and choſe thy favour for my ſingle inheritance, leaving the conduct of my life entirely to thee. Thoſe

These were my vows, and these I have often renewed; and shall I now retract such sacred obligations, and alter a choice so just and reasonable? Forbid it, gracious God! let me never be guilty of such madness: the world has often disappointed my most confident expectations, but thou hast never deceived me. In all my distress I have found, thee a certain refuge, *my shield, my fortress my high tower, my deliverer, my rock, and he in whom I trust.* When there was none to save me, thy powerful hand has set me free; thou hast redressed my grievances, and dissipated my fears; thou hast brought me light out of obscurity, and turned my darkness into day.

When the world could afford me nothing but tempest and disorder, with thee I have found repose and undisturbed tranquillity. Thou hast been my long experienced refuge, my unfailing confidence, and I stedfastly depend on thee for my future conduct. I cannot err when guided by infinite wisdom; I must be safe in the arms of eternal love, to which I humbly resign myself. Let me have riches or poverty, honour or contempt; whatever comes from thy hands shall be thankfully received. I would hear no voice but thine, nor make a step but where I am following thee.

If thou wouldst leave me to chuse for myself, I would resign the choice again to thee.

I dread nothing more than the guidance of my own blind desires; I tremble at the thoughts of such a fatal liberty: avert gracious God, that miserable freedom. Thou foresee'st all events, and at one single view dost look through eternal consequences; therefore do thou determine my circumstances, not to gratify my own wild desires, but to advance thy glory.

Thou hast an unquestioned right to dispose of me; I am thine by necessary ties and voluntary engagements, which I thankfully acknowlege and solemnly renew: deliberately and intirely I put myself into thy hands. Whatever interest I have in this world I sacrifice to thee, and leave my dearest enjoyments to thy disposal, acknowleging it my greatest happiness to be guided by thee

Lord! what is man that thou art mindful of him? that thou who art supremely blessed, and independently happy, shouldst concern thyself with human affairs, and condescend to make our wants as much thy care as if mortal miseries could reach thee, and interrupt immortal blessedness. Thou wouldst make us sensible of thine indulgence by the most tender similitudes: a father's gentle care but faintly shadows thine, and all we can conceive of human pity falls short of thy compassion. Thou dost seem to share in our calamities, and sympathize in all our grief. No friend flies to our assistance with half

alf the ſpeed that love brings thee, nor
inſt thou ever want methods to relieve
oſe that confide in thee.

Thy providence finds or makes its way
ro' all oppoſitions: the ſtreams ſhall roll
ck to their fountains, the ſun ſhall ſtand
ll, and the courſe of nature be reverſed,
ther than thou want means to bring thy
rpoſes to paſs. No obſtacle puts a ſtand
thy deſigns, nor obſtructs thy methods:
is thy will that makes nature and neceſſity?
ho can ſtay thy hand, or ſay unto thee,
hat doſt thou? Thy counſel ſhall ſtand,
nd thou wilt do all thy pleaſure. Nothing
impoſſible for thee to accompliſh: wher-
ver I caſt my eyes, I ſee inſtances of thy
ower: the extended firmament, the ſun
nd ſtars, tell me what thou art able to per-
orm; they atteſt thy omnipotence, and
ebuke my unbelief. The whole creation
leads for thee, and condemns my infideli-
y.

Almighty God, forgive my diffidence,
hile I confeſs 'tis moſt inexcuſable. Thy
and is not ſhortened, nor are the ſprings
f thy bounty ſealed; thy ancient miracles
ave not exhauſted thy ſtrength, nor hath
erpetual beneficence impoveriſhed thee;
y power remains undiminiſhed, and thy
ercy endureth for ever. That dazzling
tribute ſurrounds me with tranſporting
lories: which way ſoever I turn, I meet

the

the bright conviction: I cannot recal a d of my past life on which some signature thy goodness is not stamped.

Oh! who hath tasted of thy clemency
In greater measure or more oft then I?
Which way soe'er I turn my face or feet,
I see thy mercy and thy glory meet.

In whatever thou hast granted, or wha ever thou hast denied me, thy beneficen has been mingled with every dispensation thou hast not taken the advantage of m follies, nor been severe to my sins; but ha remembered my frame, and treated m with the utmost indulgence. Glory be t thy name for ever.

XXIII. *Redeeming Love.*

ALmighty love, the theme of every he venly song! infinite grace, the wo der of angels! forgive a mortal tongue th attempts thy praise; and yet should man b silent, the mute creation would find a voic to upbraid him.

But oh! in what language shall I speak With what circumstance shall I begin? Sha I roll back the volumes of eternity, and be gin with the glorious design that determi man's redemption before the birth of time before the confines of creation were fix ed. *Infinit*

Infinite years before the day,
Or heaven began to roll?

Shall I ſpeak in general of all the nations of the redeemed? Or to excite my own gratitude, ſhall I conſider myſelf, my worthleſs ſelf, included by an eternal decree among the number of thoſe who ſhall hear of a Redeemer's name, and be marked out a partaker of that immenſe privilege? Before the foundation of the hills were laid, the gracious deſign was formed, and the bleſſed plan of it ſchemed out before the curtains of the ſky were ſpread.

Lord! what is man? What am I? What is all the human race, to be thus regarded? O narrow thoughts, and narrower words! here confeſs your defects; theſe are heights not to be reached by you. Adorable meaſures of infinite clemency! unſearchable riches of grace! with what aſtoniſhment do I ſurvey you! I am ſwallowed and loſt in the glorious immenſity. All hail, ye divine myſteries, ye glorious paths of the unſearchable Deity! let me adore tho' I can never expreſs you.

Yet ſhould I be ſilent, heaven and earth, nay hell itſelf would reproach me: the damned themſelves would call me ungrateful, ſhould I fail to celebrate that grace whoſe loſs they are for ever lamenting a

loſs

loſs that leaves them for ever deſperate and undone. 'Tis this grace which tunes the harps of heaven, and yields them an immortal ſubject of harmony and praiſe. The ſpirits of juſt men made perfect fix their contemplations here; they adore the glorious myſtery, and while they ſing the wonders of redeeming love they aſcribe ſublime and living honours to him that ſits on the throne, and to the Lamb for ever. And infinitely worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive the grateful homage: who ſhall not praiſe and magnify thy name? Who ſhall deny the tribute of thy glory?

But alas! what can mortal man add to thee? What can nothingneſs and vanity give? We murmur from the duſt, and attempt thy praiſe from the depths of miſery; yet thou doſt condeſcend to hear and liſten to our broken accents; amidſt the hallelujahs of angels our groans aſcend to thee, our complaints reach thee: from the height of thy happineſs, and from the exaltations of eternal glory, thou haſt a regard to man, poor, wretched man! thou receiveſt his homage with delight; his praiſes mingle with the harmony of angels, nor interrupt the ſacred concord. Thoſe natives of heaven, thoſe morning-ſtars ſing together in their heavenly beatitudes, nor diſdain to let the ſons of earth and mortality join with them in celebrating the honours of Jeſus, their

their Lord and ours: to him be every tongue devoted, and let every creature for ever praise him. *Amen.*

XXIV. *Pleading for pardon and holiness.*

IMmortal spring of life, the fountain of all existence, the first and last, *without beginning of days, or end of years*; before the heavens were created thou wast, and shalt remain unchanged while they wax old and decay. Thou art infinitely blessed in thyself, thy glory admits of no addition; the praises of angels cannot heighten the happiness, nor the blasphemies of hell diminish it. Thou canst do every thing, and thy power finds no obstacle. *Thou madest heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water; thou dost according to thy will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; thou holdest the waters in the hollow of thy hand, and measurest out the heavens with a span: thou comprehendest the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighest the mountains in scales, and the hills in a ballance: thou covereſt thyself with light as with a garment*, and art surrounded with inaccessible splendor: *Thou art glorious in holiness, fearful in praises; the heavens are not clean in thy sight, but thou chargest thine angels with folly: what then is man, that drinks in iniquity like water? What is man that thou art*

mindful

mindful of him, or the ſon of man, that thou dоſt thus viſit him? 'Tis becauſe thou art good, and thy mercy endureth for ever: mercy is thy prevailing attribute. Thou art compaſſionate, and infinitely gracious, and haſt fully manifeſted thy love and beneficence to the race of man, in the glorious methods of our redemption from everlaſting bondage and death by thy Son Jeſus.

Therefore with the loweſt reverence and moſt humble gratitude, I deſire to proſtrate myſelf before thee, acknowledging it my greateſt honour, and unſpeakable privilege, to approach the Lord, and bow myſelf before the high God; I that am unworthy to utter thy tremendous name, or once to lift up my eyes to heaven. To my own confuſion, I have confeſs I have abuſed the mercy which I now implore, and injured that goodneſs and forbearance of my ſins which I am now addreſſing myſelf to. I have forfeited the very benefits I aſk, and deſpiſed thoſe ſacred privileges which I am forced to plead: I can uſe ſcarce any motive but what would carry in it my own condemnation. Shall I implore thy mercy by the gracious terms of the new covenant ſealed by the blood of thy eternal Son! Alas! that gracious covenant I have violated, and profaned its ſacred ſeals: I have ſinned againſt the cleareſt light, and the tenderest inſtances of love: I have not only broke

my

my obligations to thee as my Creator, but the ſtronger engagements of my adoption, even the glorious privilege of being admitted into thy family, and numbered among the children of God.

But ſtill thoſe very circumſtances that aggravate my guilt, exalt thy mercy; here the freeneſs and magnificence of thy grace will diſplay itſelf; here thou wilt anſwer the indulgent title of a Father in its tendereſt extent; I have no ſins too great for infinite clemency to pardon. Thou art God and not man; and as the heavens are high above the earth, ſo high are thy ways of compaſſion above all human methods.

I dare not ſet bounds to thy goodneſs, nor affirm that *thus far, and no farther*, divine patience extends. Thou haſt pardoned and reſtored me to thy favour too often for me now to deſpair: my penitent ſighs were never rejected, nor my humble requeſt unanſwered: I have always found the heavens open, and the throne of God acceſſible, through the blood of a Redeemer. By his agony and bloody ſweat, by his croſs and paſſion, by his painful death and glorious reſurrection, I implore thy pardon: he has made a full atonement, and divine juſtice will demand no further ſatisfaction. *To him give all the prophets witneſs, that through his name, whoſoever believes in his name, ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins.*

O bleſſed Jeſus, the hope of the Gentiles, the ſalvation of the ends of the earth, the great Meſſiah, the promiſed Saviour, who doſt anſwer thoſe glorious titles in their utmoſt ſignification, to thee, my certain, my experienced refuge, I fly: O Son of God, hear me; O Lamb of God, who takeſt away the ſins of the world, have mercy on me.

O eternal Spirit, the promiſed Comforter come with all thy ſacred conſolations; come and be as dew to the drooping flowers, as rain to the parched ground; Oh! come with thy reviving light, and diſpel the darkneſs that beclouds my ſoul: break in like the ſun after a melancholy night; one beam of thine would melt this frozen, this obdurate heart, and kindle in my ſoul the ſparks of holy love: breathe upon my cold affections, and raiſe them to a ſacred flame.

Searcher of hearts, from whom nothing is concealed, whoſe penetrating eyes find out hypocriſy in its darkeſt diſguiſe; thou knoweſt the deſires of my ſoul, and art my impartial witneſs that I kneel not here for the riches and honours of the world; that I am not proſtrate before thee for length of days or pleaſure; but that 'tis the kingdom of God, and the righteouſneſs thereof, that I ſeek. Give me not my portion with the rich and great, but let me have my humble lot

ot with thy children; let me bear contempt nd deriſion, and ſuffer reproach with the eople of God, rather than enjoy the plea-ures of ſin which are but for a ſeaſon.

Thy favour is the end of all my wiſhes, the conſtant ſubject of my prayer. Oh! thou whoſe ears are open to the wants of all thy creatures, who heareſt the young ravens when they cry from their neſts to thee, who giveſt the men of the world the tranſitory things they chuſe, wilt thou deny the deſires which thou thyſelf doſt inſpire and approve? O let me be filled with that righteouſneſs which I hunger and thirſt after, and be ſatisfied with thy likeneſs. Thou canſt not be diminiſhed, whatever perfection thou doſt communicate to the creature; endleſs liberality could not make thee poor

I aſk not privileges above the capacity of my nature, nor aſpire to the perfections of angels; I only beg that I may reach thoſe heights of holineſs and divine love, which ſouls inveſted with a mortal body like mine, and incumbered with the ſame human paſſions, have attained. But in vain I ſtrive to imitate thoſe bright examples thou haſt ſet before me; without thy aſſiſtance all my endeavours will prove ſucceſsleſs. Thou knoweſt the frailty of my nature, and the mighty difficulties I have to encounter: I have not only the allurements of the world,

but all the ſtratagems of hell to engage with, and a treacherous heart within, ready on all occaſions to betray me into ſin and endleſs perdition: O let my impotence and danger awaken thy compaſſion.

Remember thy former benignity, O Lord, and let that engage thee to grant me new ſupplies of that grace, by which alone I ſhall prove victorious. Thy bounty to any of the works of thy hands muſt always flow from the goodneſs of thy own nature; for what creature can pretend to merit any thing from thee? I would urge nothing but thy own infinite mercy, when I entreat thee not to let me periſh after the wonderful things thou haſt done for my ſoul; after all the pledges thou haſt given me of thy love, let not my follies provoke thee to forſake me; but remember thy covenant, and its gracious articles, and act according to thy own ineffable benignity, which has been the glorious motive of every favour I have received from thee.

XXV. *A tranſport of gratitude for ſaving mercy.*

I Bleſs a thouſand times the happy day when firſt a beam of heavenly light broke in on my ſoul; when the day-ſtar from on high viſited, and the celeſtial light began to dawn,

dawn, I welcomed its chearful luſtre, and felt the ſacred influence; the flame of holy love awoke, and holy joys were kindled. The earth and all its pageantry diſappeared like clouds before the morning-ſun: the ſcenes of paradiſe were opened——ſeraphic pleaſures and unutterable delights: all hail, I cryed, you unknown joys, you unexperienced pleaſures! compared to you what's all I have reliſhed till now? What's earthly beauty and harmony? What's all that mortals call charming and attractive? I never lived till now: I knew no more than the name of happineſs till now: I have been in a dream during all the days of my folly and vanity; but now I awake to the life of heaven-born ſpirits, and taſte the joy, of angels.

XXVI. *Importunate requeſts for the return of GOD to the ſoul.*

THOU great and glorious, thou inviſible and univerſal being, art thou no nearer to be approached? Or do I ſearch thee amiſs? Is there a corner of the creation unviſited by thee, or any place exempt from thy preſence? I trace thy footſteps through heaven and earth, but I cannot overtake thee.

Why do I ſeek thee, if thou art not here?
Or find thee not if thou art every where?

Tell me, O my God, and my all, tell me where thou art to be found, for there is the place of my reſt. What imaginable good can ſupply thy abſence? Deprived of thee, all that the world could offer would be like a jeſt to a dying man, and provoke my averſion and diſdain. 'Tis a God that I ſeek:

My wiſhes ſtoop not to a lower aim;
Thou, thou haſt kindled this immortal flame,
Which nothing can allay.

Adieu, adieu to all human things! let me find my God, the end of all my wiſhes; why doſt thou keep back the face of thy throne? Why does the cloud and ſacred darkneſs conceal thee?

Thy voice produc'd the ſeas and ſpheres,
Bid the waves roll, and planets ſhine;
But nothing like thyſelf appears
Thro' all theſe various works of thine.

O thou fairer than all the works of thy hands, wilt thou ever hide thyſelf from a creature that loves and ſeeks thee with ſo intenſe deſire? I appeal to thee, O Lord

are

are not my breathings after thee moſt hearty and unfeigned? Does not my ſoul pant after thee with a fervour which cannot be extinguiſhed, and a ſincerity which cannot be diſguiſed?

For thee I pine, and am for thee undone,
As drooping flowers that want their parent (*Sun.*

How do my ſpirits languiſh for thee! No ſimilitudes can expreſs the vehemence of my deſires: wealth and glory, friends and pleaſure loſe their names compared to thee. To follow thee I would leave them all behind; I would leave the whole creation, and bid the fields and ſparkling ſkies adieu. Let the heavens and earth be no more, while thou endureſt for ever, I can want no ſupport. My being itſelf with all its bleſſedneſs depends entirely on thee.

Place me far from the bounds of all creation, remote from all exiſtence but thy own; in that ineffable ſolitude let me be loſt, let me expatiate there for ever, let me run the endleſs rounds of bliſs——But, alas! I flatter myſelf in vain with ſcenes of unattainable happineſs. I will ſearch thee then, where I hope thou mayeſt be found, I caſt my eyes to the bright regions above, and almoſt envy the happy beings that ſee thy face

face unveiled: I ſearch thee in the flowry meadows, and liſten for thee among the murmuring ſprings: then ſilent and abſtracted from human things, I ſearch thee in holy contemplation; 'tis all in vain; no fields, nor floods, nor clouds, nor ſtars reveal thee.

Ye happy ſpirits that meet his ſmiles and hear his voice, direct a mournful wanderer while I ſeek him who my ſoul loves, while I ſigh and complain, and caſt my languiſhing eyes to yonder happy manſions: fain would I penetrate the ſtarry pavilions, and look through the ſeparating firmament: Oh that thou wouldſt divide the clouds, that thou wouldſt rend the heavens, and give me one glimpſe of thy glory; that thou wouldſt diſplay thy beauty, and in the midſt of theſe earthly ſcenes of amuſing vanity, give me one moment's interval of celeſtial bleſſedneſs.

One look of mercy from thy eye,
One whiſper of thy voice,
Exceed a whole eternity
Employ'd in carnal joys.
Could I the ſpacious earth command,
Or the more boundleſs ſea,
For one dear hour at thy right hand
I'd give them both away.

If things were put into juſt ballances, and computed

mputed aright, for the first moment of is satisfaction I am ready to say. The hole creation would be cheaply loſt: how adly would I reſign all for ſuch a bliſs. Adieu to human things; let me find my God, e end of all my wiſhes: 'tis he whom I k, 'tis he alone can ſatisfy my infinite deres. Oh! why doſt thou withdraw? Why us long conceal thyſelf? Where doſt thou tire? Nor earth, nor heaven reply to my peated calls.

Let me invoke thee by every gracious le My God, and the God of my fathers; om one generation to another thou haſt en our dwelling-place; the claim has ſcended from age to age; thy covenant as been eſtabliſhed with us, and thy faithlneſs remains unblemiſhed. Oh! forget ot thy covenant, forget not the bleſſings ntailed on me; forget not the prayers and ars by which my pious anceſtors have ngaged thy mercy for me; forget not eir vows and ſolemn dedication of me to ee: oh! recal thy ancient favours, and new thy former mercy to a family which as been thine in a ſucceſſion of ages.

Let me invoke thee now by a nearer ropriety; my covenant God, my Father, nd my friend! if by all thoſe tender names have ever known thee, forget me not. y thoſe ſacred engagements, O Lord, I entreat

entreat thy return. If all thy paſt favour
were real, if all was waking bliſs, and not
gay deluſion, O reſtore my heaven agai
Life of my ſoul, light of my eyes, return
come and bring all thy ſacred conſolations
once again let me experience thoſe ho
joys that thy preſence imparts; once aga
let me hear thy voice, and once again
bleſt with thy ſmiles.

Oh! hear, and to my longing eyes
Reſtore thy wonted light;
And ſudden'y, or I ſhall ſleep
In everlaſting night.

Bleſſed Saviour, in thee we behold t
face of God as a reconciled Father; a
doſt thou withdraw thyſelf? O how we
come will thy returns be? How like t
breakings of immortal day will thy preſen
chear me? How dearly ſhall I prize
happineſs? How fearful ſhall I be of eve
thing that would offend thee? How joy
in the bleſſed diſcovery and poſſeſſion of t
love! I would whiſper my bliſs to the liſte
ing ſtreams and groves.

I'd grave thy paſſion on the bark,
And every wounded tree
Shou'd droop, and bear ſome myſtic mark
That JESUS dy'd for me.

The ſwains ſhall wonder when they read
Inſcrib'd on all the grove
That heaven itſelf came down and bled
To win a mortal's love.

But why do I flatter myſelf with theſe de-
ghtful ſcenes? I find thee abſent ſtill: I
ourn and complain as one unpityed: what
life while thou art abſent? Oh! return
d bleſs me with thy preſence, thou who
noweſt my diſtreſs, and art acquainted with
y ſecret cares; thou who art the witneſs
my midnight ſighs, and doſt hear when
the dawning day I call thee; but ſtill thou
nſwereſt not, and ſeemeſt deaf to my pray-
s. I am, 'tis true a worthleſs wretch;
t vile as I am, thou haſt in thy immenſe
mpaſſion brought me into covenant with
ee:

y beloved is mine, and I am his.
He is my ſun, tho' he refuſe to ſhine;
Tho' for a moment he depart,
I dwell for ever on his heart,
For ever he on mine.

Nothing can break the ſacred union; but
r this confidence I were undone; but for
is beam of hope I were loſt in eternal
rkneſs. *Why art thou diſquieted, O my*
l, *and why art thou caſt down within me?*

Hope

Hope in God, for I shall yet praise him f the light of his countenance. I shall yet w come his return, I shall yet hear his voic and meet his favourable smiles.

But why, O my God, this long suspens Why do these intervals of night and dar ness abide upon me, and torment my hea so long? Wilt thou deny a bliss so easily gra ted? I ask not more than is lawful for mo tality to wish. I ask not the visions of ange here below, nor the beatitudes of perfect spirits; I ask but what thou hast bid me see and given me hopes to obtain; I ask th sacred fellowship, that ineffable communi with which thou favourest thy saints.

Oh! let me hear those heavenly whispe that give them the foretastes of immort pleasures: let me be sensible of those divi approaches that kindle celestial ardour their souls: let me meet those beams th darken all mortal beauty let me enjoy, this earthly distance, those smiles that a the bliss of angels in heaven. Tho' 'tis b darkly, and afar off, yet let me feel their i fluence; 'twill brighten the passage of li it will direct me through its mazes, a gild its rough and gloomy paths: it w raise the flames of sacred love, it will wak the divine principle within me, and set a glowing through all my powers. shall forget the vanities below, and t glories of the world will be no more. B wh

while thou O my God, hideſt thy face, I loſe my ſun, I languiſh and die: yet to thee I will lift up my eyes, to thee I will lift up my ſoul.

Come, Lord, and never from me go;
This world's a darkſome place;
I find no pleaſure here below
When thou doſt veil thy face.

XXVII. *Breathing after GOD, and weary of the world*

'TIS no mean beauty of the ground
That has allur'd my eyes;
I faint beneath a nobler wound,
Nor love below the ſkies.

If words can reach the heights of love and gratitude, let me pour out the ſecret ardour of my ſoul: O let it not offend thy greatneſs, that duſt and vanity adores and loves thee. If thou hadſt given me other capacities, and formed any thing more ſuitable to my wiſhes, I might have found a lower happineſs, and been content with ſomething below the infinite Deity; but the ſcanty creation affords nothing to ſatisfy me, and I follow thee by a divine inſtinct and mere neceſſity of nature.

My life is uſeleſs, and by being inſignifi-

cant without thee, my reaſon has no proper employment; love, the nobleſt paſſion of my ſoul, has no object to anſwer its dignity. I am reduced to abſolute poverty; my nature is entirely ruined, I am loſt eternally loſt, undone, and abandoned to deſpair, if I am deprived of thee. There can be no reparation made for an infinite loſs; nothing can be inſtead of God to my ſoul.

I have willingly renounced all things elſe for thy ſake: all the ſentiments of tenderneſs and delight, that my ſoul ever feels for an earthly object, is mere indifference, compared to my love for thee; and it grows into hatred when that object ſtands as thy rival or competitor. This is the conquering, the ſuperior flame that draws in and ſwallows up all the other ardours of my nature. My engagements with all terreſtrial things, are broken; the names of father, of brother, or of friend, are no more: abſtracted from thee, theſe tender titles give me neither confidence, nor joy, and are mere inſignificant names, but as thou doſt give them an emphaſis; they are nothing at all without thee; and with thee, what finite good can be an addition?

The ſoul can hold no more, for God is all;
He only equals its capacious graſp,
He only overfills to ſpaces infinite.

Thou

Thou art my God, and I have enough; my ſoul is ſatisfied, I am entirely at reſt. Divide the vain, the periſhing creation to the miſerable wretches that aſk no other portion; let them unenvyed poſſeſs the honours, and riches, and pleaſures of the world; with a laviſh hand divide them away; theſe things are but as the duſt of the ballance to the happy ſoul that knows what the light of thy countenance imports. After that there can be no reliſh left for the low delights of mortality.

Loſt in the high enjoyments of thy love,
What glorious mortal could my envy more?

You ineffable delectations of divine love, let me have no ſentiment of pleaſure left but for you. My God revealing his glories and his graces in Jeſus Chriſt his Son, is ſufficient for my eternal entertainment.

What if all former ideas of viſible things were wiped from my ſoul? What if I had no imagination, no memory, no traces left of any thing but the joys I have found in thy preſence, and the aſſurances of thy everlaſting favour? Thoſe are the only paſt moments I recal with pleaſure; and oh! let all the vaſt eternity before me be ſpent in theſe ſatisfactions.

Vaniſh, ye terreſtrial ſcenes! fly away,

ye vain objects of ſenſe! I reſign all thoſe poor and limited faculties by which you are enjoyed; let me be inſenſible to all your impreſſions, if they do not lead me to my God. Let chaos come again, and the fair face of nature become an univerſal blank: let her glowing beauties all fade away, and thoſe divine characters ſhe wears be effaced, I ſhall yet be happy; the God of nature, and the original of all beauty is my God.

What if the ſun were extinguiſhed in the ſkies, and all the etherial lamps had burnt out their golden flames, I ſhall dwell in light, and immortal day, for my God will be ever with me. When the groves ſhall no more renew their verdure, nor the fields and valies boaſt any longer their flowery pride; when all theſe lower heavens, and this earth are mingled in univerſal ruin, and theſe material images of things are no more; I ſhall ſee new regions of beauty and pleaſure for ever opening themſelves in the divine eſſence with all their original glories.

But oh! how various, how boundleſs, how tranſporting will the proſpect be? Oh! when ſhall I bid adieu to phantoms and deluſions, and converſe with eternal realities? When ſhall I drink at the fountain head of eſſential life and bleſſedneſs?

——————————*and then,*

" *O what!*

" O what?—But ask not of the tongues of men,
" For angels cannot tell;—let it suffice,
" Thyself, my soul, shalt feel thy own full joys,
" And hold them fast for ever.

Oh! break my fetters for I must be gone.—Bring my soul out of prison; I am straitned; the whole creation is too narrow for me; I sicken at this confinement, and groan and pant for liberty. How sweet are the thoughts of enlargement? My soul is already on the wing, and practises imaginary flights: I seem to reach the heaven of heavens, where God himself resides. It is good for me to be here.——

But ah! how soon do clouds of mortal sense
Arise, and veil the charming vision?——

Alas! what do I here in this waste and dreadful wilderness? This dismal region, where our delights are vanishing and the very glimpses of future felicity we enjoy are so soon over-shaded and surrounded with real horrors? Alas! what do I here, wasting that breath in sighs and endless complaints, that was given me to bless and praise the infinite Creator? Alas! what do I here, among strangers and enemies, in this wild unhospitable place, far from my home, and all the objects of my solid delight?

My wiſhes, hopes, my pleaſures, and my love,
My thoughts, and nobleſt paſſions are above.

What do I hear in the dominions of death and ſin, in the precincts and range of the powers of darkneſs? Here they lay their toils, and ſet their fatal ſnares; but, Lord, what part have they in me? I have bid defiance to the powers of darkneſs in thy ſtrength, and renounced my ſhare in the vanities of the world. I am a ſubject of another kingdom, and dare not enter into any terms of peace and amity with the irreconcilable adverſaries of God and my ſoul, which inhabit theſe treacherous and ſinful regions. *The friendſhip of this world is enmity with God.* Death and deſtruction are in its ſmiles; I ſtand on my guard, and am every moment in danger of ſurprize: oh! when will my deliverance come from on high?

——————*when, my ſoul,*
O when ſhall thy releaſe from cumb'rous fleſh
Paſs the great ſeal of heaven? What happy hour
Shall give thy thoughts a looſe to ſoar and trace
The intellectual world?

What glorious ſcenes will open when once this mortal partition falls, when theſe walls of clay ſhall tottor and ſink down into duſt? Ye waters of life, ye torrents of immortal pleaſure, how impetuouſly will you

d then roll in upon me, and ſwell and fill all the capacities of joy in my nature? very faculty ſhall then be filled, and every iſh ſhall end in unutterable fruition. *When awake* into immortal light, *I ſhall be ſatisfied with thy likeneſs.* Theſe expreſsleſs deres will die into everlaſting raptures: hope nd languiſhing expectation will be no more; ut preſent, complete, and unbounded isfactions will ſurround me. My God, y God himſelf ſhall be my infinite, my nutterable joy: all the avenues of pleaſure ſhall be open before me, the ſcenes of eauty and proſpects of delight. *Everlaſting joy ſhall be upon my head, and ſorrow and ighing ſhall fly away for ever.*

There will be no more intervals of grief nd ſin; ſin, that inſupportable evil, that worſt, that heavieſt burden: here the painful and deadly preſſure lies; 'tis this that hangs as a weight on all my joys; but, thanks be to my God, I can ſay, I ſincerely deteſt and hate this vileſt of ſtavaries, this curſed bondage of corruption; I long for the glorious liberty of the ſons of God; I groan under this load of fleſh, this burden of mortality, this body of death.

But grant, O Lord, I may with patience continue in well-doing, and at laſt obtain glory and immortality thro my Redeemer's righteouſneſs. *Sanctify* me *through thy word of truth* †; remember this requeſt of my glorious advocate.

† *John* xvii.

XXVIII. *A prayer for ſpeedy ſanctification*

O LORD GOD, grant and holy, all-ſufficient, and full of grace, if thou ſhouldſt bid me from a wiſh, and take whatſoever in heaven or earth I had to aſk, it ſhould not be the kingdoms of this world, nor the crowns of princes; no, nor ſhould it be the wreaths of martyrs, nor the thrones of archangels: my firſt requeſt is to be made holy; this is my higheſt concern. Rectify the diſorders ſin has made in my ſoul, and renew thy image there; let me be ſatisfied with thy likeneſs. Thou haſt compaſſed my paths with mercy in all other reſpects, and I am diſcontented with nothing but my own heart; becauſe it is ſo unlike the image of thy holineſs, and ſo unfit for thy immediate preſence.

Permit me to be importunate here, O bleſſed God, and grant the importunity of my wiſhes; let me be favoured with a gracious and ſpeedy anſwer. for I am dying while I am ſpeaking; the very breath with which I am calling upon thee, is carrying away a part of my life: this tongue that is now invoking thee, muſt ſhortly be ſilent in the grave: theſe knees that are bent to pay thee homage, and theſe hands that are now lifted to the Moſt Holy God for mercy, muſt ſhortly be mould'ring to their original duſt: theſe eyes will ſoon be cloſed in death

ath, which are now looking up to thy
one for a bleſſing. Oh! prevent the
ing hours with thy mercy, and let thy
our outſtrip the haſty moments.

Thou art unchanged, while roling ages
ſs along; but I am decayed with every
eath I draw: my whole allotted time to
epare for heaven is but a point, compar-
d with thy infinite duration. The ſhort-
ſs and vanity of my preſent being, and
e importance of my eternal concerns join
gether to demand my utmoſt ſolitude,
d give wing to my warmeſt wiſhes. Be-
re I can utter all my preſent deſires, the
ſty opportunity perhaps is gone, the
lden minute vaniſhed, and the ſeaſon of
ercy has taken its everlaſting flight.

Oh! God of ages, hear me ſpeedily, and
ant my requeſt while I am yet ſpeaking;
y frail exiſtence will admit of no delay;
ſwer me according to the ſhortneſs of my
uration, and the exigence of my circum-
nces. My buſineſs, of high importance
it is, yet is limited to the preſent NOW,
e paſſing moment; for all the powers on
rth cannot promiſe me the next.

Let not my preſſing opportunity there-
re offend thee; my happineſs, my ever-
ſting happineſs, my whole being is con-
rned in my ſucceſs: as much as the en-
yment of God himſelf is worth, is at ſtake.

Thou

Thou knoweſt, O Lord, what qualifications will fit me to behold thee; thou knoweſt in what I am defective; thou canſt prepare my ſoul in an inſtant, to enter into thy holy habitation: I breathe now, but the next moment may be death; let not that fatal moment come before I am prepared. The ſame creating voice that ſaid *Let there be light*, and there was light, can in the ſame manner purify and adorn my ſoul and make me fit for thy own preſence; and my ſoul longs to be thus purified and adorned. O Lord, delay not, for every moment's interval is a loſs to me, and may be a loſs unſpeakable and irrepairable. Thy delay cannot be the leaſt advantage to thee; thy power and thy clemency are as full this preſent inſtant, as they will be the next; and my time as fleeting, and my wants as preſſing.

Remember, O eternal God, my loſt time is for ever loſt, and my waſted hours will never return, my neglected opportunities can never be recalled; to me they are gone for ever, and cannot be improved; but thou canſt change my ſinful ſoul into holineſs by a word, and ſet me now in the way to everlaſting improvement.

O let not the Spirit of God reſtrain itſelf, but bleſs me according to the fulneſs of thy own being, according to the riches of thy

thy grace in Christ Jesus, according to thy infinite unconceivable love manifested in that glorious gift of thy beloved Son, wherein the fulness of the God-head was contained: 'tis through his merit and mediation I humbly wait for all the unbounded blessings I want or ask for.

XXIX. *Gratitude for early and peculiar favours.*

LET me trace back thy mercy, O my God, from the first early dawn of life, and bless thee for the privileges of my birth, that it was not in the lands of darkness, where no ray of the gospel had ever darted its light; where the name of a Saviour never had reached my ears, nor the transporting tidings of redemption from eternal misery had ever blessed my soul.

But how shall I express my gratitude for that grace which ordained my lot in this happy land, one of the islands of which it was long since propheſied, *they should see thy glory, and trust in thy name? God has enlarged Japhet*, even the islands of the sea, *and made him to dwell in the tents of Shem*, in the inheritance of Abraham. I have my descent from the Gentiles, who were once *strangers to the covenant of grace, aliens from the common-wealth of Israel*; but are now brought nigh by the blood of sprinkling: Jesus,

Jesus, the great Peace-maker, hath brou both near to God, and to each other.

I bless thee with all my powers for t privilege of my descent from pious anc tors; that thou hast been their dwellin place from generation to generation, a hast not *taken thy loving kindness from th seed, nor suffered thy faithfulness to fail.*

Thou hast extended thy mercy to me t last and least of all my father's house, u worthy to wipe the feet of the meanest the servants of my Lord, and yet by an absolute act of goodness I am brought into t family, and numbered with the children God. Even so it has seemed good in t sight, who *art gracious to whom thou wilt gracious.*

I might have been a vessel of wrath, trophy to thy justice, instead of a mon ment of thy mercy: how unsearchable t ways! who uncontrolled and free! tho didst regard me in my low estate, in mo than my original guilt and misery; for had improved the wretched stock, and bec a voluntary, as well as a natural slave to and death.

From this ignominious slavery, thou, m great Redeemer, hast ransomed me, an brought me into the glorious liberty of t sons of God: I was a stranger, and tho didst take me in; naked, and thou ha clothe

clothed me with the spotless robes of thy own righteousness; I was hungry, and thou didst feed me; thirsty, and thou didst give me to drink of the fountain of life.

What am I, O Lord, and what is my father's house, that thou hast dealt thus graciously with me, in entering into an everlasting covenant, signed and sealed, even sensibly sealed to my soul by the witness of the Spirit? Lord, why me rather than many that were companions of my early vanities and folly? Whence were the motives drawn but from thy sovereign pleasure? How many are passed by, that could have done thee more service, and returned a warmer acknowlegement to thy distinguishing bounty?

Ye spirits of just men made perfect, ye ransomed nations, triumphant above, instruct me in the art of celestial eloquence; tell me in what strains of sacred harmony you express your gratitude for this glorious redemption, while in exalted raptures you sing *to him that loveth and washed you in his own blood, and made you kings and priests to God.*

XXX. *Aspiring after the vision of GOD in heaven.*

I *Beseech thee, shew me thy glory*: it was a mortal in a state of frailty and imperfec-

tion that made this bold, but pious request; which I repeat on different terms: since none can see thy face and live, let me die to behold it. This is the only request I have to make, and this will I seek after, that I may behold the beauty of the Lord: not as I have seen it in thy sanctuary below; but in full perfection and splendor, as thou art seen by seraphs and cherubs by angels, and archangels, and the spirits of just men made perfect.

O my God, forgive my importunity: thou hast commanded me to love thee with all my heart, my soul, my strength, and hast by thy Spirit kindled the sacred flame in my breast; from this rises my present impatience; from hence the ardour of my desires spring. Can I love thee, and be satisfied at this distance from thee? Can I love thee, and not long to behold thee in perfect excellence, and beauty? Is it a crime to press forward the end for which I was created? All my wishes and my hopes of happiness terminate in thee.

Does not the thirsty traveller pine for some refreshing stream? Would not the weary be at rest, or the wretched captive be free? And shall not my thirsty, weary, captive soul long for refreshment, liberty, and rest? I am but a stranger, a pilgrim here, and have no abiding place; this is not my rest, my home; and yet if thou hast any

employment

employment for me, though the meaneſt office in thy family, I will not repine at my ſtay.

But, O Lord, thou haſt no need of ſuch worthleſs ſervice as I can pay thee; thy angels are ſpirits, thy miniſters flames of fire; thouſands of thouſands ſtand before thee, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand miniſter unto thee; they attend thy orders, and fly at thy command, O deliver me from this burden of mortality, and I will ſerve thee with a zeal as pure and active as theirs.

I can ſpeak of thy loving kindneſs to the children of men in a very imperfect manner; but then I will join with the celeſtial quire, in praiſing thee, and rehearſe to liſtening angels what thou haſt done for my ſoul. Here I have a thouſand interruptions from the delightful work, a thouſand cold and darkſome intervals, when my heart and tongue are both untuned, a thouſand neceſſary diſtractions that riſe from the miſeries of mortality; but when theſe intervals of grief and ſin ſhall ceaſe, my ſoul ſhall dwell at eaſe, and be for ever glad, and rejoice in thy ſalvation.

XXXI. *A ſurrender of the ſoul to GOD.*

COmmand me what thou wilt, O Lord, give me but ſtrength to obey thee: be thy terms never ſo ſevere, O let us never

part. I reſign my will, my liberty, my choice to thee; I ſtand diveſted of the world, and aſk only thy love as my inheritance. Give or deny me what thou wilt, I leave all the circumſtances of my future time in thy hands: let the Lord guide me continually: here I am, do with me what ſeemeth good in thy ſight, only do not ſay, *Thou haſt no pleaſure in me*,

Let me not live to diſhonour thee, to bring a reproach on thy name, to prophane the blood of the Son of God, and grieve the Spirit of grace. O take not thy loving-kindneſs from me, nor ſuffer thy faithfulneſs to fail. Thou haſt ſworn by thy holineſs, and thou wilt not lie to the ſeed of thy ſervants; thou haſt ſworn that the generation of the righteous ſhall *be bleſſed: veſt me with* this character, O my God, and fulfil this promiſe to a worthleſs creature.

XXXII. *Truſt and reliance on the divine promiſes.*

O Let not my importunity offend thee, for 'tis the importunity of faith; 'tis my ſtedfaſt belief in thy word that makes me perſiſt: thy word and thy oath, *the two immutable things in which it is impoſſible for God to lie*, give *me ſtrong conſolation*.

'Tis this that makes me preſs forward to thy throne, and with confidence lay hold on thy

thy ſtrength, thy wiſdom, and thy faithfulneſs, on thy goodneſs and tender compaſſion; thoſe glorious attributes for which *the children of men put their truſt under the ſhadow of thy wings*, 'Tis thy glory to be the confidence of the ends of the earth, and it was long ſince predicted, *That in thy name the Gentiles ſhould truſt.*

Kind guardian of the world, our heavenly aid,
To whom the vows of all mankind are paid.—

We pay thee the higheſt homage, and exalt thy infinite attributes by faith and confidence in thee.

I know that *thou art*, and believe thee *a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek thee.* I will never quit my hold of thy promiſes; there I fix my hopes: I will not let a title go, nor part with a mite of the glorious treaſure. I humbly hope I have a rightful claim; thou art my God, and the God of my religious anceſtors, the God of my mother, the God of my pious father: dying and breathing out his ſoul, he gave me to thy care, he put me into thy gracious arms, and delivered me up to thy protection. He told me thou wouldſt never leave nor forſake me; he triumphed in thy long experienced faithfulneſs and truth, and gave his teſtimony for thee with his lateſt breath.

And now, O Lord God of my Fathers,

whose mercy has descended from age to age, whose truth has remained unblemished, and inviolable, and whose love remains without decay, O Lord, the faithful God and the true, keeping covenant and mercy to a thousand generations, let me find that protection and blessing that the prayers of my dying father engaged for me: now, in the time of my distress, be a present help; and if thou wilt this once deliver me, thou alone shalt be my future trust, my counsellor, and hope; to thee I will immediately apply myself, and look on the whole force of created nature as insignificant. To thee I will devote all the blessings thou shalt give me, my time, my life, my whole of this world's goods; whatever share thou shalt graciously allot me, shall surely be the Lord's.

Oh! hearken to the vows of my distress, and for thy own honour deliver me from this perplexity which thou knowest, and reveal to me the abundance of mercy and truth.

'Twas my dependance on thy promise and fidelity that brought me into this exigence; I staggered not at thy promises through unbelief, but boldly ventured on the credit of thy word: I took it for my security, and can the strength of Israel repent? Canst thou break thy covenant, and alter the thing that is gone out of thy mouth.

O God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and the

God

God of Jacob, this is thy name for ever, and this is thy memorial to all generations; the God before whom my fathers walked, the God that fed me all my life long till now, and the angel that redeemed me from all evil, bleſs me. Let the God of Jacob be my help, let the Almighty bleſs me; let the bleſſings of my father *prevail above the bleſſing of his progenitors to the utmoſt bounds of the everlaſting hills.*

Bleſs me according to thy own greatneſs, according to the unſearchable riches of thy grace in Chriſt Jeſus; he is the ſpring of all my hope, in whom all the promiſes of God are yea and amen: he is the true and faithful witneſs, and has by his death ſealed the divine veracity, and is become ſurety for the honour and faithfulneſs of the Moſt High God. To this alſo the holy Ghoſt, the Spirit of truth, beareth witneſs.

Oh! great Jehovah, Father, Son and holy Ghoſt, the Lord God Omnipotent, hear and grant my requeſt, for the glory of thy mighty name, that name which ſaints and angels bleſs and love: let thy perfection be manifeſt to the children of men; let them ſay there is a God that judgeth in the earth; let them confeſs thou doſt keep thy covenant with the ſeed of thy ſervants, that thy righteouſneſs is from age to age, and thy ſalvation ſhall never be aboliſhed; let them ſee and acknowlege, that in the fear

of

of the Lord is ſtrong confidence, and his children have a place of refuge.

Unſhaken as the ſacred hill,
And firm as mountains be;
Firm as a rock the ſoul ſhall reſt
That leans, O Lord, on thee.

Memorandum.

This act of faith in God was fully anſwered, and I leave my teſtimony, that *the name of the Lord is a ſtrong tower, and he knoweth them that put their truſt in him.*

XXXIII. *Application to the divine truth.*

HOwever intricate and hopeleſs my preſent diſtreſs may be to human views, why ſhould I limit the Almighty? Or why ſhould the holy One of Iſrael limit himſelf? Nature and neceſſity are thine; thou ſpeakeſt the word, and it come to paſs; no obſtacle can oppoſe the Omnipotence of thy will, nor make thy deſigns ineffectual.

Is thy hand at all ſhortened ſince the glorious period when thy mighty power and thy ſtretched arm formed the heavens and earth; when theſe ſpacious ſkies were ſpread at thy command, and this heavy globe fixed on its airy pillars.

The strong foundations of the earth
Of old by thee were laid;
Thy hands the beauteous arch of heaven
With wond'rous skill have made.

And *these shalt wax old as a garment, as a ure shalt thou change them, and they shal changed*; but shouldest thou, like these, cay, where were the hopes of them that nfide in thee? If in all generations thy nfections were not the same, what sonso- ion could the race of men draw from the cient records of thy wonderful works? hy are we told, *thou didst divide the sea, make a path for thy people thro' the mighty ters*; that thou didst *rain bread from aven*, and dissolve the flinty rock in chrys- rills to give thy chosen nation drink?

Thou art he that distinguished Noah in universal deluge, and preserved the float- ark amidst winds, and rains, and tumul- uus billows.

'Twas thy protecting care that led Abra- m from his kindred and his native coun- , and brought him safely to the promis- land.

Thou didst accompany *Jacob* in his jour- y to *Padan-aram*, and gave him bread to t, and raiment to put on, till greatly in- eased in substance, he returned to his fa- r's house; he wrestled for a blessing, he estled with the Almighty, and prevailed.

With

With Joseph thou wentest down into E
gypt, and didst deliver him out of all his ad
versities, till he forgot his sorrows, and a
toil of his father's house.

Thou didst remember thy people in th
Egyptian bondage, and look with pityin
eyes on their affliction; and after fou
hundred and thirty years, on the very da
thou didst promise, didst release and brin
them out with triumph and miracles. Th
presence went with them in a pillar of
cloud by day, and a protecting fire by night
thy conquering hand drove out great an
potent nations, and gave them an entir
possession of the land promised to their fa
thers; nor didst thou fail in the least circum
stance of all the good things thou hadst pr
mised.

What a cloud of witnesses stand on r
cord? Joshua and Gideon, Jeptha and Sam
son, who thro' faith obtained promises.

Thou didst command the ravens to fe
thy holy prophet; and at the word of
prophet didst sustain the widow's fami
with a handful of meal.

Thou didst walk with the three Hebre
in the fiery furnace: thou wast present wi
Daniel in the lions den to deliver him b
cause he trusted in thee.

In what instance has the prayer of fai
been rejected? Where were the righteo
ever forsaken? who can charge God, wit

ut chargir g him fooliſhly? What injuſtice s been found in the Judge of all the earth? lis glorious titles have ſtood unblemiſhed om generation to generation; nor can ny of his perfections decay, or roll'ing ears make a change on the *Ancient of days*.

Are not his words clear and diſtinct, ithout a double meaning, or the leaſt deeit? Are they not ſuch as may juſtly ſeure my confidence? Such as would ſatisfy ne from the mouth of man, unconſtant an, whoſe breath is in his noſtrils, and his oundation in the duſt, unſtable as water, nd fleeting as a ſhadow? And can I ſo owly aſſent to the words of the moſt High? hall I truſt impotent man, that has neither iſdom nor might to accompliſh his deigns, that cannot call the next breath or otion his own, nor promiſe himſelf a moent in all futurity? Can I reſt on theſe eeble props, and yet tremble and deſpond hen I have the veracity of the eternal God o ſecure and ſupport me?

I know he will not break his covenant, or ſuffer his faithfulneſs to fail: I dare teſt it in the face of earth and hell, I dare ake my all for time and eternity on this lorious truth, a truth which hell cannot lemiſh, nor all its malice contradict.

Exert yourſelves, ye powers of darkneſs, ring in your evidence, collect your inſtanes, begin from the firſt generations ſince the world

world was peopled, and men began to c
on the name of the Lord, when did th
call in vain? When did the holy One
Israel fail the expectation of the humb
and contrite spirit? Point out in your blac
est characters the dismal period, when t
name of the Lord was no more a refuge
them that trusted in him? Let the annals
hell be produced, let them mark the drea
ful day, and distinguish it with eternal t
umphs.

In vain you search; for neither heave
nor earth, nor hell have ever been witn
to the least deviation from truth or justic
the Almighty shines with unblemished gl
ry, to the confusion of hell, and the confo
ation of those that put their trust in him.

On thy eternal truth and honour I entir
ly cast myself; if I am deceived, I am d
ceived: angels and archangels are delud
too; they, like me, have no dependan
beyond the divine veracity for their bless
ness and immortality: they hang all the
hopes on his goodness and immutability
if that fails, the celestial paradise vanish
and all its glories are extinct; the gold
palaces sink, and the seraphic thrones m
totter and fall. Where are your crown
ye spirits elect? Where are your songs a
your triumphs, if the truth of God c
fail? A mere possibility of that would dark
the fields of light, and turn the voice of m
body into grief and lamentation. Wh

What pangs would raiſe, even through all the regions of bleſſedneſs, what diſſidence and fear would ſhake the heart of every inhabitant, what agonies ſurprize them all, could the word of the moſt High God be cancelled? The pillars of heaven might then tremble, and the everlaſting mountains bow, the celeſtial foundation might be moved from their place, and that nobleſt ſtructure of the hands of God be chaos, and eternal emptineſs.

But for ever *juſt and true are thy ways, thou king of ſaints; bleſſed are all they that put their truſt in thee*; for thou art a certain refuge in the day of diſtreſs, and under the ſhadow of thy wings I will rejoice. *My ſoul ſhall make her boaſt in the Lord, and triumph in his ſalvation: I called on him in my diſtreſs, and he has delivered me from all my fears.* —Hallelujah.

Here I diſmiſs my carnal hope,
My fond deſires recal;
I give my mortal intereſt up,
And make my God my All.

XXXIV. *Glory to GOD for ſalvation by JESUS, and his blood.*

LET me give glory to God before I die, and take ſhame and confuſion to myſelf. I aſcribe my ſalvation to the free

and abſolute goodneſs of God. Not by the ſtrength of reaſon, or any natural inclination to virtue, but *by the grace of God I am what I am.* O my Redeemer; be the victory, be the glory thine. I expect eternal life and happineſs from thee, not as a debt, but a free gift, a promiſed act of bounty. How poor would my expectations be, if I only looked to be rewarded according to thoſe works which my own vanity, or the partiality of others, have called *good*, and which if examined by thy divine purity, would prove but ſpecious ſins? As ſuch I renounce them; pardon them, gracious Lord, and I aſk no more; nor can I hope for that, but thro' the ſatisfaction which hath been made to divine juſtice for the ſins of the world.

O Jeſus, my Saviour, what harmony dwells in thy name! celeſtial joy, immortal life is in the ſound.

Sweet name! in thy each ſyllable
A thouſand bleſs'd Arabias dwell;
Mountains of myrrh, and beds of ſpices,
And ten thouſand paradiſes.

Let angels ſet this name to their golden harps; let the redeemed of the Lord for ever magnify it.

O my propitious Saviour, where were my hopes but for thee? How deſperate, how

how undone were my circumſtances? I look on myſelf, in every view I can take, with horror and contempt. I was born in a ſtate of miſery and ſin, and in my beſt eſtate am altogether vanity. With the utmoſt advantages I can boaſt, I ſhrink back, I tremble to appear before unblemiſhed majeſty. O thou in whoſe name the Gentiles truſt, be my refuge in that awful hour. To thee I come, my only confidence and hope. Let the blood of ſprinkling, let the ſeal of the covenant be on me. Cleanſe me from my original ſtain, and my contracted impurity, and adorn me with the robes of thy righteouſneſs, by which alone I expect to ſtand juſtified before infinite juſtice and purity.

O enter not into judgment with me, for the beſt actions of life cannot bear thy ſcrutiny; ſome ſecret blemiſh has ſtained all my glory. My devotion to God has been mingled with levity and irreverence; my charity to man with pride and oſtentation: ſome latent defect has attended my beſt actions, and thoſe very things which perhaps have been highly eſteemed by men, have deſerved contempt in the ſight of God.

" *When I ſurvey the wond'rous croſs*
" *On which the prince of glory dy'd,*
" *My richeſt gain I count my loſs,*
" *And pour contempt on all my pride.*

" *Forbid it, Lord, that I ſhould boaſt,*
" *Save in the croſs of Chriſt my God:*
" *All the vain things that charm me moſt,*
" *I ſacrifice them to thy blood.*

April 30. 1725.

XXXV. *A review of divine mercy and faithfulneſs.*

I Am now ſetting to my ſeal that God is true, and leaving this as my laſt teſtimony to the divine veracity. I can from numerous experiences aſſert his faithfulneſs, and witneſs to the certainty of his promiſes. *The word of the Lord is tryed, and he is a buckler to all thoſe that put their truſt in him.*

O come, all you that fear the Lord, and I will tell you what he has done for my ſoul; I will aſcribe righteouſneſs to my Maker, and leave my record for a people yet unborn that the generation to come may riſe up and praiſe him.

Into whatever diſtreſs his wiſe providence has brought me, I have called on the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears; I truſted in God, and he ſaved me. Oh! let my experience ſtand a witneſs to them that hope in his mercy; let it be to the Lord for a praiſe and a glory.

I know not where to begin the recital of thy numerous favours. Thou haſt hid me in the ſecret of thy pavilion, for the

pride

pride of man, and from the ſtrife of tongues when by a thouſand follies I have merited reproach: thou haſt graciouſly protected me, when the vanity of my friends, or the malice of my enemies might have ſtained my reputation: thou haſt covered me with thy feathers, and under thy wings have I truſted: thy truth has been my ſhield and my buckler; to thee I owe the bleſſing of a clear and unblemiſhed name, and not to my own conduct, nor the partiality of my friends. ——Glory be to thee, O Lord.

Thou haſt led me through a thouſand labyrinths, and enlightened my darkneſs: When ſhades and perplexity ſurrounded me, my light has broke forth out of obſcurity, and my darkneſs been turned into noon-day. Thou haſt been a guide and a father to me. When I knew not where to aſk advice, thou haſt given me unerring counſel: *The ſecret of the Lord has been with me, and he has ſhewn me his covenant.*

In how many ſeen and unſeen dangers haſt thou delivered me? How narrow my gratitude? How wide thy mercy? How innumerable are thy thoughts of love? How infinite the inſtances of thy goodneſs? How high above the ways and thoughts of men?

How often haſt thou ſupplyed my wants, and by thy bounty confounded my unbelief? Thy benefits have ſurprized and juſtly reproached my diffidence; my faith has often

failed, but thy goodneſs has never failed. The world and all its flatteries have failed, my own heart and hopes have failed, but thy mercy endures for ever, thy faithfulneſs has never failed.

The ſtrength of Iſrael has never deceived me, nor made me aſhamed of my confidence. Thou haſt never been as a deceitful brook, or as waters that fail to my ſoul.

In loving kindneſs, in truth, and in very faithfulneſs, thou haſt afflicted me: oh! how unwillingly haſt thou ſeemed to grieve me? With how much indulgence has the puniſhment been mixed? Love has appeared through the diſguiſe of every frown; its beams have glimmered thro' the darkeſt night; by every affliction thou haſt been ſtill drawing me nearer to thyſelf, and removing my carnal props, that I may lean with more aſſurance on the eternal rock.

Thy love has been my leading glory from the firſt intricate ſteps of life: the firſt undeſigning paths I trode were marked and guarded by the vigilance of thy love; oh! whither elſe had my ſin and folly led me?

How often have I tryed and experienced thy clemency, and found an immediate anſwer to my prayers? Thou haſt often literally fulfilled thy word; I have a freſh inſtance of thy faithfulneſs again; thou haſt made me triumph in thy goodneſs, and given a new teſtimony to the veracity of thy promiſes.

And,

And after all, what ingratitude, what inſenſibility regions in my heart? Oh! cancel it by the blood of the covenant: root out this monſtrous infidelity that ſtill returns after the fulleſt evidence of thy truth. Thou haſt graciouſly condeſcended to anſwer me in thy own time and way, and yet I am again doubting thy faithfulneſs and care. *Lord*, pity me, *I believe, O help myunbelief.* Go on to ſuccour, go on to pardon, and at laſt conquer my diffidence. Let me hope againſt hope, and in the greateſt perplexity give glory to God by believing what my own experience has ſo often found—— *That the Strength of Iſrael will not lie, nor is he as man that he ſhould repent.*

While I have memory and thought let his goodneſs dwell on my ſoul. Let me not forget the depth of my diſtreſs, the anguiſh and importunity of my vows: when every human help failed, and all was darkneſs and perplexity, then God was all my ſtay. Then I knew no name but his, and he alone knew my ſoul in adverſity. Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul, and forget not all his benefits.

" *Long as I live I'll bleſs thy name,*
" *My King, and God of love:*
" *My work and joy ſhall be the ſame*
" *In the bright worlds above.*

I have

I have yet a thouſand, and ten thouſand deliverances to recount, ten thouſand unaſked for mercies to recal; no moment of my life has been deſtitute of thy care; no accident has found me unguarded by thy watchful eye, or neglected by thy providence. Thou haſt been often found unſought by my ungrateful heart, and thy favours have ſurprized me with great and unexpected advantages; thou haſt compelled me to receive the bleſſings my fooliſh humour deſpiſed, and my corrupt will would fain have rejected. Thou haſt ſtopped thy ears to the deſires which would have ruined and undone me, when I might juſtly have been left to my own choice for the puniſhment of my many ſins and follies. How great my guilt! how infinite thy mercy!

Hitherto God has helped, and here I ſet up a memorial to that goodneſs which has never abandoned me to the malice and ſtratagems of my infernal foes, nor left me a prey to human craft or violence. The glory of his providence has often ſurprized me when groping in thick darkneſs. With a potent voice he has ſaid, *Let there be light and there was light.* He has made his goodneſs paſs before me, and loudly proclaimed his name, *the Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious.* To him be glory for ever. *Amen.*

XXXVI

XXXVI. *Some daily experiences of the gracious methods of divine providence to me the leaſt and moſt unworthy of all the ſervants of my Lord.*

FIRST WEEK†.

I.

EVery day's experience reproaches my unbelief, and brings me ſome new evidence of thy faithfulneſs. Thou haſt diſpelled my fears, and, to the confuſion of my ſpiritual foes, thou haſt heard the voice of my diſtreſs. But a few hours ago, I was trembling and doubting, if thou waſt indeed a God hearing prayer; and now I have a freſh inſtance of thy goodneſs, which with a grateful heart I here record: may the ſenſe of thy benefits dwell for ever on my ſoul.

II.

Thy mercies are new every morning; again thou haſt given me an inſtance of thy truth; *I truſted in God, and he has delivered me; I will love the Lord, becauſe he has heard the voice of my ſupplication; therefore will I call on him as long as I live.*

III.

† Note. *The diviſion of theſe meditations into ſevens by the pious writer, ſeems tell us, that theſe were the devout thoughts of ſix weeks of her life.*

III.

As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the Lord is tryed; he is a buckler to all that put their truſt in him. He has punctually fulfilled the word on which I relied: bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul.

IV.

Thy bounty follows me with an unwearied courſe; language is too faint to expreſs thy praiſe; no eloquence can reach the ſubject. My heart is warm with the pious reflection; I look upwards, and ſilently breathe out the unutterable gratitude that melts and rejoices my ſoul: I ſtaggered at thy promiſe through unbelief, and yet thou haſt graciouſly performed thy words. If we ſometimes doubt or faulter in our faith, yet he abideth faithful who has promiſed.

V.

With the morning-light my health and peace are renewed: the chearing influence of the ſun, and the ſweeter beams of the divine favour ſhine on my tabernacle.—Lord, why me? Why am I a ranſomed pardoned ſinner?—Why am I rejoicing among the inſtances of ſovereign grace and unlimited clemency?

VI.

I boaſted in thy truth, and thou haſt not made me aſhamed: my infernal foes are confounded, while my faith is crowned with ſucceſs.

Oh!

Oh! who hath tasted of thy clemency,
In greater measure and more oft than I?

VII.

As the week begun, so it ends with a series
mercy: language and numbers fail to
ckon thy favours, but this shall be my e-
nal employment.

When nature fails, and day and night
Divide thy works no more,
My ever thankful soul, O Lord,
Thy goodness shall adore.

SECOND WEEK.

I.

Have seen the goings of my God my King in his sanctuary; but O, how transient the
w! my sins turned back thy clemency,
d yet I can celebrate the wonders of for-
ing grace.

II.

What do I owe thee, O thou great Pre-
ver of men, for easy and peaceful sleep,
nights unmolested with pain and anxiety.

Thou round my bed a guard dost keep;
Thine eyes are open while I sleep.

Not a moment slides in which I am un-
rded by thy gracious protection.

III

III.

Thanks be to God, who has given m
the victory thro' the Lord *Jesus Chr*
Thou hast delivered me from the snare
the fowler, and craft and malice of hell, a
kept me back from sinning against thee; b
thine the victory and praise, Hallelujah.

IV.

O Lord God of *Israel, happy is the m*
that putteth his trust in thee. I left my bu
then at thy feet, and thou hast sustained me
my cares are dissipated, my desires answe
ed. *O who is a God like unto thee, near unt*
all that call on thee?

V.

Thy strength is manifest in weakness
Not unto me, O Lord, but to thee be all th
glory.

For ever thy dear charming name
Shall dwell upon my tongue,
And JESUS and salvation be
The theme of every song.

This shall be my employment thro' a
eternal duration; 'tis that alone can mea
sure my gratitude. The Lord Jehovah
my strength and salvation, he also shall b
my song.

VI.

Every day's experience confirms m
faith, and brings a fresh evidence of th
goodness. Thou hast dispelled my fear
and

and, to the confuſion of my ſpiritual foes, hearkened to the voice of my diſtreſs.

VII

I will love the Lord, who has heard my ſupplications. I made my boaſt in his faithfulneſs, and he has anſwered all my expectation.

THIRD WEEK.

I.

MY laſt exigence will be the cloſing part of life. Oh! remember me then, my God. Thou who haſt led me hitherto, forſake me not at laſt. Be my ſtrength when nature fails, and the flame of life is juſt expiring; let thy ſmiles chear the gloomy hour: Oh! then let thy gentle voice whiſper peace and ineffable conſolation to my ſoul.

II.

In ſix and in ſeven troubles thou haſt delivered me, and *been a covert from the tempeſt. a hiding place from the winds:* hitherto God has helped, and I have dwelt ſecure; and here I leave a memorial to thy praiſe, a witneſs againſt all my future diſtruſt of thy faithfulneſs and truth.

III.

Every day of my life encreaſes the ſum of thy mercies: the riſing and the ſetting ſun, in its conſtant revolution, can witneſs the renewal of thy favours; thou waſt graciouſly preſent in an imminent danger; by

thee my bones have been kept entire, and thou haſt not ſuffered me to daſh my foot againſt a ſtone.

IV.

Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul and all that is within me, bleſs his holy name. Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul, and forget not all his benefits; who heals thy diſeaſes, and pardons all thy ſins. O thou the great Phyſician of my body, as well as of my diſtempered ſoul, thou haſt reſtored and ſaved me from death and hell. Bleſſed Jeſus, thou haſt *taken my infirmities, and born my ſickneſs: the chaſtiſment of my peace was on thee, and by thy ſtripes I am healed.*

V.

I ſubſcribe to thy truth, O Lord; I atteſt it in contradiction to infernal malice, to all the helliſh ſuggeſtions that would tempt my heart to diffidence and unbelief, even againſt repeated experience, againſt the fulleſt evidence of the divine veracity.

VI.

Oh! thou, who never ſlumbereſt nor ſleepeſt, this night thy watchful care has kept me from a threatening danger; thy eyes were open, while I was ſleeping ſecure beneath the covert of thy wings.

VII.

Another, and a greater deliverance has crowned the day: I have found thy grace ſufficient in an hour of temptation, thy ſtrength

ſtrength has been manifeſt in my weakneſs. Thine was the conqueſt; by the crown and the glory thine for ever. Be thee I have triumphed over the ſtratagems of hell; *not unto me, but to thy name be the praiſe, O Lord.*

FOURTH WEEK.

I.

'TIS not one of a thouſand of thy favours I can record; but eternity is before me, and that unlimited duration ſhall be employed to rehearſe the wonders of thy grace. Then in the great aſſembly I will praiſe thee, I will declare thy faithfulneſs, and tell to liſtening angels what thou haſt done for my ſoul, even for me, the leaſt in thy family, unworthy to wipe the feet of the meaneſt of the ſervants of my Lord.

II.

How numberleſs are thy thoughts of love to my ſoul! if I ſhould count them, they are more than the ſand on the ſhore: thou haſt again reproved my unbelief, and given me a new conviction that my whole dependence is on thee; that ſecond cauſes are nothing, but as thou doſt give them efficacy: all nature obeys thee, and is governed at thy command.

III.

O my God, I am again ready to diſtruſt thee, and call in queſton thy faithfulneſs: oh! how deep has this curſed weed of infi-

delity rooted itſelf in my nature, but thou canſt root it out.

IV.

Again I muſt begin the rehearſal of thy mercies, which will never have an end; for thou doſt renew the inſtances of thy goodneſs to a poor ungrateful ſinner. Thou haſt punctually fulfilled the promiſe on which I depended; thou haſt granted the requeſt of my lips, and led me in a plain way that I have not ſtumbled.

V.

This day I have received an unexpected favour: I doubted the ſucceſs indeed, but thou haſt gently rebuked my unbelief, and convinced me that all things are poſſible with thee, and that the hearts of the children of men are in thy hands.

VI.

Whether thou doſt favour or afflict me, I rejoice in the glory of the attributes in whatever inſtance they are diſplayed. Be thy honour advanced whether in mercy or juſtice, I muſt ſtill aſſert the equity of thy ways, and aſcribe righteouſneſs to my Maker. Yet let me plead with thee, O my God; ſince mercy is thy darling attribute, oh! let it now be exalted: deal not with me in ſeverity, but indulgence; for if thou ſhouldſt mark what is amiſs, who can ſtand before thee?

VII.

VII.

Thou doſt heal my diſeaſes, and renew my life; thou art the guardian of my ſleeping and my waking hours. Glory to my God, whoſe eyes never ſlumber.

FIFTH WEEK.

I.

THOU knoweſt my ſecret grief, where my pain lies, and what are my doubts and difficulties. In thy wonted clemency, O Lord, diſpel my darkneſs; leave me not to any fatal deluſion in an affair of everlaſting moment. This is my hour of information and practice; beyond the grave no miſtake can be rectified; as the tree falls, ſo it muſt for ever lie.

II.

Thy goodneſs ſtill purſues me, O heavenly Father, with an unwearied courſe; new inſtances of thy faithfulneſs reproach my unbelief. I ſent up my petition with a doubting heart, and yet thou haſt graciouſly deigned to encourage my weak and ſtaggering faith, which has often wavered and failed, even in the view of the brighteſt evidence of thy power and truth.

III.

Thou doſt ſeem reſolved to leave my unbelief without excuſe, by renewing the glorious conviction of thy clemency and truth. O let not the unworthineſs of the

object turn back thy benignity from its natural course.

IV.

How many unrecorded mercies have glided along with my fleeting moments into thoughtless silence, and long oblivion? How prone is my ungrateful heart to forget thy benefits, or (oh! amazing guilt) to make an ungrateful return?

V.

Oh! never let my false heart relapse into distrust and unbelief again: thou hast rebuked my folly, and put a new song of praise into my mouth: let those infernal suggestions vanish that would once object against thy oft-experienced truth. In this I would still triumph, and insult all the malice of hell. A time will come when thou shalt be glorified in thy saints, when thy truth and faithfulness shall appear in full splendor, when the beauty of thy attributes shall be conspicuous, and clear from every blemish that the impiety of men, or the malice of devils has charged on thy most righteous providence.

VI.

Let me still assert, that the ways of God are perfect justice and truth: I have a fresh instance of thy goodness to boast, and yet my ungrateful heart is even now ready to distrust. The Lord encrease my faith: let thy renewed favours silence my unbelief; *to shew that the Lord is upright; he is my*

rock

rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

VII.

Teach me your language, ye ministers of light, that I may express my wonder and gratitude. O thou, who canst explain the secret meaning of my soul, take the praise that human words cannot express: accept these unutterable attempts to praise thee.

SIXTH WEEK.

I.

LET me go on, O Most Holy, to record thy faithfulness and truth; let it be engraven in the rock for ever; let it be impressed on my soul, and impossible to be effaced. — What artifice of hell is it that so often tempts me to distrust thee, and joins with my native depravity to question thy truth?

II.

Oh! may I never forget this remarkable preservation: thy gentle hand supported me, and underneath were the everlasting arms. *Thou hast kept all my bones, not one of them is broken:* thy mercy upheld me even when it foresaw my insensibility and ingratitude. How does my guilt heighten thy clemency? How wonderous is thy patience, O Lord, and thy rich grace, that only gently rebuked me when thou mightest have taken severe vengeance of my sins?

III.

I must again begin rehearsal of thy love. Thou hast eased my pain, scatter my fears, and lengthened out my days: oh! may my being be devoted to thee; let it be for some remarkable service that I am restored to health again.

IV.

I find thy mercies renewed with my fleeting days, and to rehearse them shall be my glad employment. I trusted thee with little affairs, and thou hast condescended to give me success. Lord, what is man, that thou dost thus graciously regard him? Even my sins, my hourly provocations cannot put a check to the course of thy beneficence; it keeps on its conquering way against all the opposition of my ingratitude and unbelief; and hast thou not promised, O Lord, it shall run parallel with my life, and measure out my days?

V.

Jesus, my never-failing trust, I called on thy name, and thou hast fully answered my hopes: let thy praises dwell on my tongue, let me breathe thy name to the last spark of life. Thou hast scattered my fears, and been gracious beyond all my hopes: my faint and doubting prayers have not been rejected; but oh! how slow are my returns of praise, how backward my acknowlegements?

VI.

VI.

Never have I truſted thee in vain; Lord, increaſe my faith; confirm it by a continued ſeries of thy bounty: add this favour to the reſt, for faith is the gift of God, an attainment above reaſon or nature. I am now waiting for the accompliſhment of a promiſe; oh! ſhew me thy mercy and truth; add this one inſtance to the reſt, and forever ſilence the ſuggeſtions of hell and my own infidelity.

VII.

How rooted is this curſed principal of unbelief, that can yet diſtruſt thee after ſo many recorded inſtances of thy love? How long will it be e're my wavering ſoul ſhall entirely confide in thy ſalvation? Oh! my God, pity my weakneſs, give new vigour to my faith, and let me take up my reſt in thee for ever.

THE END

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